

LUCIFER AND THE LORD

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Plays

TWO PLAYS

(THE FLIES *and* IN CAMERA)

THREE PLAYS

(CRIME PASSIONNEL, MEN WITHOUT SHADOWS

THE RESPECTABLE PROSTITUTE)

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE



LUCIFER
AND THE
LORD

A PLAY IN ELEVEN SCENES

Translated from the French
by
KITTY BLACK



HAMISH HAMILTON
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CHARACTERS

GOETZ
HEINRICH
NASTI
TETZEL
KARL
THE ARCHBISHOP
HEINZ
SCHMIDT
GERLACH
THE BANKER
A PROPHET
THE BISHOP OF WORMS
FRANZ
SCHULHEIM
NOSSAK
REITSCHEL
HILDA
CATHERINE
A WOMAN
A WITCH

} Barons

Officers, Soldiers, Citizens, Peasants and Servants.

The action of the play takes place in Germany, around the town of Worms, in the middle of the Renaissance. Two violent crises shook the various German states at this period: two closely related events—the Peasants' Revolt, and the beginning of the Lutheran Reformation.

‘LUCIFER AND THE LORD’ was produced for the first time in Paris at the Théâtre Antoine on Thursday

Production by Louis Jouvet
Settings by Félix Labisse

GOETZ	<i>Pierre Brasseur</i>
HEINRICH	<i>Jean Vilar</i>
NASTI	<i>Henri Nassiet</i>
TETZEL	<i>Jean Toulout</i>
KARL	<i>R. J. Chauffard</i>
HILDA	<i>Maria Casarès</i>
CATHERINE	<i>Marie-Olivier</i>

NOTE: Numerous cuts were made by M. Jouvet for his production, but the text printed here is complete and unabridged.

LUCIFER AND THE LORD

ACT I

SCENE I

Left, between heaven and earth, a hall in the Archbishop's palace. Right, the Bishop's palace and the ramparts of the town of Worms. For the moment, only the Archbishop's palace is visible, the rest being lost in shadows.

THE ARCHBISHOP (*at his window*). Will he come? Oh Lord ; on my coinage, the thumbs of my subjects have worn away image and inscription : now Thy terrible thumb is wearing away my flesh and blood. I am no more than the shadow of an archbishop. Should the close of this day bring the news of my defeat, I shall become transparent, so great is Thy usance. And then, oh Lord, what good shall I be as Thy servant? [*A servant enters.*] Is it Linehart?

THE SERVANT. No, your Eminence. The banker Foucre. He is asking . . .

THE ARCHBISHOP. Later. [*Pause.*] What is Linehart doing? He should be here with fresh news. [*Pause.*] Do they talk of the battle in the kitchens?

THE SERVANT. They talk of nothing else, my lord.

THE ARCHBISHOP. What are they saying?

THE SERVANT. That our prospects are excellent. Conrad is caught between the mountains and the river, and . . .

THE ARCHBISHOP. I know, I know. But if a man fights a battle, he may also lose a battle.

THE SERVANT. Your Eminence . . .

THE ARCHBISHOP. Leave me. [*The servant goes.*] My Lord, why hast Thou permitted this? The enemy invades my lands, and

my faithful town of Worms revolts against me while I am engaging Conrad. They dared strike me in the back. I did not know, Lord, that such great things were reserved for Thy servant. Must I wander from door to door, a blind beggar, led by a little child? I am ready to obey, if such be Thy holy will. But remember, O Lord, I pray you, that I am no longer young, and I never had a real vocation as a martyr.

In the distance cries of "Victory! Victory!" The ARCHBISHOP listens, and lays his hand on his heart.

THE SERVANT [*entering*]. Victory! Victory! We have won a great victory, my lord. Colonel Linehart has arrived.

LINEHART [*entering*]. Victory, your Eminence. Victory. Complete and classic. A model battle. A historical achievement. The enemy loses six thousand killed or drowned, the rest are in flight.

THE ARCHBISHOP. Thanks be to God. And Conrad?

LINEHART. Among the dead.

THE ARCHBISHOP. Thanks be to God. [*Pause.*] If he is dead, then I forgive him. [*To LINEHART*] I give you my blessing. Go out and spread the news.

LINEHART [*full of enthusiasm*]. A little after sunrise, we were aware of a cloud of dust . . .

THE ARCHBISHOP [*interrupting*]. No, no! No details! Never bother me with details. A victory described in detail is indistinguishable from a defeat. At least, this time it really is a victory?

LINEHART. A pearl of a victory; real style and elegance.

THE ARCHBISHOP. Leave me now. I must pray. [*LINEHART goes. The ARCHBISHOP begins to caper round the room.*] I've won! I've won! [*His hand on his heart*] Ooh! [*He falls on his knees on his prie-Dieu*] Let us pray.

Part of the stage lights up on the right. Ramparts and a sentinel's post. HEINZ and SCHMIDT are sitting on the crenellations.

HEINZ. I don't believe it. . . . I don't believe it. God would never allow it.

SCHMIDT. Wait. They'll begin again. See! One—two—three . . . Three . . . and one—two—three—four—five . . .

NASTI [*appearing on the ramparts*]. What's the matter?

SCHMIDT. Nasti! We've had bad news.

NASTI. For God's elect the news is never bad.

HEINZ. For more than an hour, we've been watching the signal-fires. Once every minute they repeat the message, and it's always the same one. See! One—two—three—three and five. [*He points to the mountain.*] The Archbishop has won a battle.

NASTI. I know.

SCHMIDT. The situation is desperate; we are trapped here in Worms without allies and without supplies. You told us Goetz would finally lose patience and raise the siege, that Conrad would destroy the Archbishop. Well, Conrad is dead, the Archbishop's armies can join with Goetz's troops before our walls. There is nothing we can do but die.

GERLACH [*entering, running*]. Conrad is beaten. The Burgo-master and elders of the city are meeting at the Town Hall.

SCHMIDT. God's blood! They must be considering how to surrender the city.

NASTI. Is your faith strong, my brothers?

ALL. Yes, Nasti, yes!

NASTI. Then fear nothing. Conrad's defeat is a sign.

SCHMIDT. A sign?

NASTI. A sign that God has sent me. Gerlach, go to the Town Hall, and try to find out what the Council has decided.

The ramparts disappear into the night.

THE ARCHBISHOP [*rising*]. Hola! [*The SERVANT appears.*] Bring in the banker. [*The BANKER enters.*] Be seated, master banker. You are covered with dust. What brings you here?

THE BANKER. I have travelled thirty-six hours without pause to prevent you committing a folly.

THE ARCHBISHOP. A folly?

THE BANKER. You are about to kill a goose that every year lays you a golden egg.

THE ARCHBISHOP. What are you talking about?

THE BANKER. Your city of Worms. I am told you are besieging it. If your troops sack the city, you will ruin yourself, and me besides. Is playing soldiers a fit game at your time of life?

THE ARCHBISHOP. It was not I who provoked Conrad.

THE BANKER. Perhaps not. But who can tell me that you didn't provoke him to provoke you?

THE ARCHBISHOP. He was my vassal and he owed me obedience.

But the Devil whispered to him to incite the knights to revolt and place himself at their head.

THE BANKER. Why didn't you accede to his demands before he lost patience?

THE ARCHBISHOP. He was demanding everything.

THE BANKER. Very well, let us overlook Conrad. He was obviously the aggressor, since he has now been defeated.

But your noble town of Worms . . .

THE ARCHBISHOP. Worms, my jewel, Worms, my delight, Worms, the ungrateful, revolted against me the very day Conrad crossed the frontier.

THE BANKER. It was a heavy sin. But three-quarters of your revenues come from Worms. Who will pay your taxes, who will reimburse my loans if you massacre your citizens like a venerable Tiberius?

THE ARCHBISHOP. They have molested the priests and forced them to take refuge in their monasteries. They have insulted my bishop and forbidden him to leave his palace.

THE BANKER. Childish nonsense! They would never have taken up arms if you had not forced them to it. Violence is only proper for those who have nothing to lose.

THE ARCHBISHOP. What do you want of me?

THE BANKER. First, your forgiveness. Let them pay you a good, fat fine, and forget the whole business.

THE ARCHBISHOP. Alas!

THE BANKER. What do you mean, alas?

THE ARCHBISHOP. I love my city, banker. Even without a fine, I forgive it with all my heart.

THE BANKER. Well, then?

THE ARCHBISHOP. It is no longer I who is besieging Worms.

THE BANKER. Then who is?

THE ARCHBISHOP. Goetz.

THE BANKER. Which Goetz? Conrad's brother?

THE ARCHBISHOP. Yes. The finest captain in all Germany.

THE BANKER. What is he doing outside the walls of your city?
I thought he was your ally?

THE ARCHBISHOP. To tell you the truth, I don't really know what he is. First, he was Conrad's ally and my foe, then he was Conrad's foe and my ally. Now . . . He has a changing humour, which is the least one can say of him.

THE BANKER. Why choose yourself such doubtful allies?

THE ARCHBISHOP. What choice did I have? He and Conrad invaded my territories. Luckily, I discovered there was a rift between them, and I promised Goetz in secret that he should have his brother's lands if he would join with me. If I had not won him away from Conrad, I should have lost this war a long time ago.

THE BANKER. So he came over to you with all his forces. And then?

THE ARCHBISHOP. I gave him command of the frontier posts. He must have grown tired of waiting, or perhaps he does not like a garrison life. One morning he appeared beneath the walls of Worms with all his army, and began the siege without a word of reference to me.

THE BANKER. Order him . . . [*The ARCHBISHOP smiles sadly and shrugs his shoulders.*] He doesn't obey you?

THE ARCHBISHOP. What general in the field obeys his political leader?

THE BANKER. So we are entirely at his mercy?

THE ARCHBISHOP. Yes. Entirely.

The ramparts again become visible.

GERLACH [*entering*]. The Council has decided to send a deputation to Goetz.

HEINZ. So that's it. [*Pause.*] The swine.

GERLACH. Our only hope will be that Goetz demands impossible conditions. If he is the man they say he is, he won't even accept complete surrender.

THE BANKER. Perhaps he will spare the city's treasures.

THE ARCHBISHOP. Not even one life, I'm afraid.

SCHMIDT [*to GERLACH*]. But why? Why?

THE ARCHBISHOP. He is a bastard—and of the worst kind. On his mother's side. He takes no pleasure in anything but evil.

GERLACH. He's a swine too, a bastard; he enjoys evil. If he wants to sack Worms, our citizens will have to fight with their backs to the wall.

SCHMIDT. If he wants to raze the city, he wouldn't be fool enough to say so. He'll demand free entry, and promise not to touch a feather.

THE BANKER [*indignantly*]. Worms owes me thirty thousand ducats. We must put an end to all this nonsense. Set your forces in motion against Goetz.

THE ARCHBISHOP [*overcome*]. I'm afraid he may beat them for me.

The Archbishop's palace disappears.

HEINZ [*to NASTI*]. Then there is really no hope for us?

NASTI. God is with us, my brothers; we cannot lose. Tonight, I will leave Worms and try to cross the camp and reach Waldorf. In a week, I can have ten thousand peasants under arms.

SCHMIDT. But how can we hold out for a week? They are capable of opening the gates to him this very night.

NASTI. They mustn't be allowed to open them.

HEINZ. Do you want to seize command?

NASTI. No. The situation is too uncertain.

HEINZ. Well, then?

NASTI. We must compromise the citizens in such a way that they'll fight for their very lives.

ALL. How?

NASTI. By a murder.

Below the ramparts, the scene lights up. A woman is sitting against the stairway which leads up to the sentinel's post. She is thirty-five and dressed in rags. She gazes ahead of her in stony silence. A priest passes, reading his breviary.

NASTI. Who is that priest? Why isn't he shut up with the others?

HEINZ. Don't you know him?

NASTI. Ah, yes. It is Heinrich. How changed he is. Nevertheless, he should have been imprisoned.

HEINZ. The poor love him because he lives as they do. We were afraid to anger the poor people.

NASTI. He is the most dangerous of all.

THE WOMAN [*seeing the priest*]. Father! Father! [*The priest tries to escape, she cries after him.*] Where are you going so fast?

HEINRICH [*stopping*]. I have nothing left! Nothing! Nothing. I have given everything away.

THE WOMAN. That's no reason to run away when someone calls you.

HEINRICH [*coming back towards her, very tired*]. You are hungry?

THE WOMAN. No.

HEINRICH. Then what do you want?

THE WOMAN. I want you to explain.

HEINRICH [*quickly*]. I refuse to explain anything.

THE WOMAN. You don't even know what I want to ask you.

HEINRICH. Very well. Quickly. What do you want me to explain?

THE WOMAN. Why the child died.

HEINRICH. What child?

THE WOMAN [*laughing a little*]. My child. Don't you remember? You buried him yesterday. He was three years old, and he had died of hunger.

HEINRICH. I am tired, my sister, and I didn't recognize you. To me, all you women seem alike, with terrible eyes . . .

THE WOMAN. Why did he die?

HEINRICH. I cannot tell you.

THE WOMAN. And yet you are a priest.

HEINRICH. Yes.

THE WOMAN. Then who can tell me, if you cannot? [*Pause.*] If I were to let myself die now, would it be a sin?

HEINRICH [*forcefully*]. Yes. A great sin.

THE WOMAN. That's what I thought. And yet, I should so much like to die. You see, you really must explain.

Pause. HEINRICH *rubs his forehead, and makes a great effort.*

HEINRICH. Nothing on earth occurs without the will of God. And God is goodness itself, therefore everything happens for the best.

THE WOMAN. I don't understand.

HEINRICH. God knows more than you can understand. What seems misfortune is a blessing in His eyes because He weighs up all the consequences.

THE WOMAN. Do you understand?

HEINRICH. No! No! I don't understand! I understand nothing! I neither can nor want to understand. We must believe—believe—believe!

THE WOMAN [*with a little laugh*]. You say we must believe and you don't look as though you yourself believe what you are saying.

HEINRICH. My sister, I have said the same words so often these last three months, I no longer know if I say them out of conviction or from habit. But make no mistake. I believe. I believe with all my strength and with all my heart. My God, I call you to witness that not for one moment has my heart been compromised by doubt. [*Pause.*] Woman, your child is in heaven, and you will be reunited with him there. [*He kneels.*]

THE WOMAN. Yes, father, of course. But heaven is different. And I'm so tired, I shall never rejoice again. Not even in heaven.

HEINRICH. My sister, forgive me.

THE WOMAN. Why should I forgive you, good father? You have done me no harm.

HEINRICH. Forgive me. Forgive in me all the other priests—all those who are rich, as well as all those who are poor.

THE WOMAN [*amused*]. I forgive you with all my heart. Does that satisfy you?

HEINRICH. Yes. Now, my sister, let us pray together. Pray to God to give us back our hope.

During the last lines, NASTI slowly comes down from the ramparts.

THE WOMAN [*seeing NASTI and interrupting herself, joyfully*]
Nasti! Nasti the Baker!

NASTI. What do you want?

THE WOMAN. Nasti, my child is dead. You must be able to say why, you who know everything.

NASTI. Yes—I know.

HEINRICH. Nasti—I implore you, say nothing. Woe to those through whom the error arises.

NASTI. He died because the rich burghers of our city revolted against the Archbishop, their very rich overlord. When the rich fight the rich, it is the poor who have to die.

THE WOMAN. Was it God's will that they should begin this war?

NASTI. God had commanded them not to begin it.

THE WOMAN. This man says nothing happens except by the will of God.

NASTI. Nothing, except evil, which is born of the wickedness of man.

HEINRICH. Nasti, you are lying. You confuse the false and the true in order to betray the souls of men.

NASTI. Dare you assert that God permits this mourning and this useless suffering? I say that God is innocent of our sins.

HEINRICH *is silent*.

THE WOMAN. Then it was not the will of God that my child should die?

NASTI. If He desired his death, why should God have created him?

THE WOMAN [*consoled*]. I think that is much better. [*To HEINRICH.*] You see, when he says that, I understand. You mean, God is sad too, when He sees how I am suffering?

NASTI. Sad unto death.

THE WOMAN. And He can do nothing for me?

NASTI. Of course He can. He can give you back your son.

THE WOMAN [*disappointed*]. Yes, I know. In heaven!

NASTI. No, not in heaven. Here on earth.

THE WOMAN [*surprised*]. On earth?

NASTI. You must first pass through the eye of a needle, and endure for seven years. Then the kingdom of God will be established on earth; our dead will arise, all men will love one another, and those who hunger will be filled.

THE WOMAN. Why must we wait seven years?

NASTI. Because we shall need seven years to endeavour to drive out the wicked.

THE WOMAN. The task is very hard.

NASTI. That is why God needs your help.

THE WOMAN. God the All-powerful needs my help?

NASTI. Yes, my sister. For seven more years, the Evil One will reign on earth; but if each one of us fights with all his strength, we shall redeem all men, and God will be redeemed too. Do you believe me?

THE WOMAN [*rising*]. Yes, Nasti; I believe you.

NASTI. Your child is not in heaven, woman. He is within you, and you will carry him for seven long years. Then he will walk at your side, holding your hand in his hand, and you will have brought him into the world a second time.

THE WOMAN. I believe you, Nasti. I believe you. [*She goes out.*]

HEINRICH. You have damned her for ever.

NASTI. If you believe that, why didn't you stop me?

HEINRICH. Ah! Because she seemed a little less unhappy. [*NASTI shrugs his shoulders.*] Oh Lord, I lacked courage to silence this blasphemer; I have sinned. But I believe, oh Lord, I believe in Thy omnipotence; I believe in Thy Holy Church, my mother, the sacred body of Jesus of which I am a member; I believe that nothing occurs except by Thy laws, even the death of a little child, and that all is well done. I believe because it is absurd! Absurd! Absurd!

The whole stage lights up. Citizens with their wives are grouped around the Bishop's palace, waiting for him to come out.

VOICES.

—Is there any news?

—No news.

—What are we doing here?

—Waiting.

—What are we waiting for?

—Nothing . . .

—Did you see? . . .

—Over there . . .

—The ugly brutes.

—When the water is stirred, the mud rises . . .

—A man isn't at home in the streets any more . . .

—We must end this war—we must end it soon. If not, disasters will occur.

—I want to see the Bishop—I want to see the Bishop . . .

—He won't appear . . . He is angry . . .

—Who? . . . Who? . . .

—The Bishop.

—Since he has been imprisoned here, sometimes he comes to the window. He draws aside the curtain and watches us.

—He doesn't look like a good man.

—What do you expect him to say?

—He may have had news.

Murmurs from the crowd, which grow into isolated shouts:

—Bishop! Bishop! Come out! . . . Show yourself! . . .

—Advise us.

—What is to happen?

—It's the end of the world!

A man springs from out of the crowd, rushes to the facade of the Bishop's palace and sets his back against it. HEINRICH draws aside from him, and rejoins the crowd.

THE PROPHET. The world is betrayed! Betrayed!

We must chastise the flesh!

Arise, arise, arise; the Lord is there.

Cries, the beginning of a panic.

A CITIZEN. Quiet—quiet! It is nothing but a prophet.

THE CROWD. Another prophet! We've had enough prophets!

We don't want to listen. They are springing up everywhere.

What's the good of imprisoning the priests?

THE PROPHET. Earth has its odours . . .

The sun complained to the Lord!

Oh, Lord, let me put out my light,

I have suffered this putrefaction enough.

The more I warm it with my rays, the higher its stink rises.

The stink of the earth sullies my golden rays.

Woe, woe, cries the sun. My fair circlet of sunlight has been dragged in the mire.

A CITIZEN. Shut your trap!

The prophet falls to the ground. The window of the palace is flung open. The BISHOP appears on the balcony in full regalia.

THE CROWD. The Bishop!

THE BISHOP. Where are the armies of Conrad? Where are his knights with their armour? Where is the legion of angels to

put the enemy to flight? You are friendless, alone, without hope and damned for ever. Answer me, citizens of Worms, answer; if you believe you are serving God by imprisoning His ministers, why has the Lord abandoned you? [*Groans from the crowd.*] Answer me!

HEINRICH. Do not destroy their courage.

THE BISHOP. Who speaks?

HEINRICH. It is I, Heinrich, the parish priest of Saint Gilhau.

THE BISHOP. Swallow your tongue, priest apostate. Dare you look on the face of your bishop?

HEINRICH. If they have sinned against you, my lord, forgive them their trespasses, as I forgive you these insults.

THE BISHOP. Judas! Judas Iscariot! Hang thyself!

HEINRICH. I am no Judas.

THE BISHOP. Then what is your business among them? Why do you plead for them! Why are you not imprisoned with your fellows?

HEINRICH. They allowed me to go free because they know that I love them. If I have not joined the other priests of my own free will, it was to ensure that masses would be said and the holy sacraments given in this lost city. Without me, the Church would be absent, Worms delivered defenceless to the powers of heresy, and its children would die like beasts of the field. . . . My Lord, do not destroy their courage.

THE BISHOP. Who fed you? Who brought you up? Who taught you to read? Who gave you your knowledge? Who consecrated you priest?

HEINRICH. The Church, my holy Mother.

THE BISHOP. You owe the Church everything. You belong to the Church.

HEINRICH. I belong to the Church, but I am also their brother.

THE BISHOP [*violently*]. The Church must be served first.

HEINRICH. Yes. The Church must be served first, but . . .

THE BISHOP. I shall speak to these people. If they persist in their errors and continue in their rebellion, I command you to rejoin the men of the Church, your true brothers, and to take your place with them at the monastery, or in the Seminary. Will you obey your Bishop?

A VOICE FROM THE PEOPLE. You mustn't leave us, Heinrich. You are the priest of the poor—you belong to us.

HEINRICH [*overcome, but in a firm voice*]. The Church must be served first. My Lord Bishop, I will obey.

THE BISHOP. People of Worms, behold your fair and flourishing city; look at it closely. Look at it for the last time. It will become an infected centre of famine and plague; and as a last horror, the rich and the poor will massacre each other. When the soldiers of Goetz enter the city, they will find nothing but rotting corpses and skeletons. [*Pause.*] I alone can save you, but you must know how to soften my heart.

VOICES. Save us—my lord Bishop—save us!

THE BISHOP. On your knees, proud burghers, and ask pardon of God! [*The burghers kneel down one after the other. The people remain standing.*] Heinrich! Will you kneel? [HEINRICH *kneels.*] Repeat after me: Lord God of heaven, forgive us our trespasses and soften the wrath of our holy Bishop.

THE CROWD. Lord God of Heaven, forgive us our trespasses, and soften the wrath of our holy Bishop.

THE BISHOP. Amen. You may rise. [*Pause.*] First, you will free the priests and the nuns, then you will open the gates of the city. You will kneel in the square outside the cathedral and wait there in humble repentance. Meanwhile, we shall go in procession to Goetz to beg him to spare your lives.

A CITIZEN. What if he refuses to hear you?

THE BISHOP. Above the power of Goetz is the power of the Archbishop. He is our holy father, and his justice will be paternal.

For some moments, NASTI has been standing on the ramparts. He listens, in silence, then on the last words, he comes down two steps of the stairs.

NASTI. Goetz does not serve the Archbishop. Goetz serves the Devil. He swore an oath to Conrad his brother, and in spite of that, he betrayed him. If he promises to spare your lives today, will you be fools enough to believe him?

THE BISHOP. You, whoever you are, I command you . . .

NASTI. Who are you to give me orders? And you, do you need

to listen? You need no orders from anyone, except from the leaders you have chosen yourselves.

THE BISHOP. And who chose you, ragamuffin?

NASTI. The people. [*To the others.*] The soldiers are on our side. I have stationed my men at the gates. If anyone tries to open them—death.

THE BISHOP. Courage, unhappy man. You are driving them to perdition. They had only one chance of safety, and you have taken that chance away from them.

NASTI. If there were no hope, I should be the first to counsel you to surrender. But who dare say God has abandoned us? Do they ask you to doubt the angels? My brothers, I tell you, the angels are there! Do not lift up your eyes—the heavens are empty. The angels are at work on this earth; they have attacked the enemy camp.

A CITIZEN. What angels?

NASTI. The angel of cholera, and the angel of pestilence—the angel of famine and the angel of discord. Hold fast—only hold fast, my brothers. The city is impregnable and God is on our side. The siege will be raised.

THE BISHOP. Citizens of Worms, those who listen to this heresy are damned to perdition. I swear it by my place in Paradise.

NASTI. Your place in Paradise? God has divided it among the dogs.

THE BISHOP. He is holding yours ready for you, warm and waiting, till the moment you come and fetch it. He must rejoice at this moment as He hears you insulting His priest.

NASTI. Who ordained you priest?

THE BISHOP. The Holy Church.

NASTI. Your Holy Church is a whore; she sells her favours to the rich. Must I make confession to you? Accept remission of my sins at your hands? Your soul is stricken with leprosy, God grinds His teeth when He beholds it. My brothers, we have no further need of priests; any man can perform the rite of baptism; any man on earth can grant absolution; all men possess the divine right to preach. I tell you truly; all men on earth are prophets, or God does not exist.

THE BISHOP. Woe! Woe! Anathema! [*He hurls his cross at his face.*]

NASTI [*pointing to the door of the palace*]. This door is worm-eaten; a single blow would split it in pieces. [*Silence.*] How patient you are, my brothers. [*Pause. To the people.*] They are men of rags; the Bishop, the Council, the rich burghers. They would surrender the city because they are afraid of the people. And who will pay for all if they surrender? You! Always you! Come, arise, my brothers. We must kill to earn our place in heaven.

The men of the people murmur.

A BURGHER [*to his wife*]. Come! Let us go.

ANOTHER [*to his son*]. Quick! We must bar the shutters and barricade the shop.

THE BISHOP. My God, I call You to witness that I have done what I could to save my people. I shall die without regrets in Thy glory, for I know now that Thy anger will be drawn down on Worms and grind the city to powder.

NASTI. This dotard will devour you alive. Why is his voice so strong? Because he eats his fill every day. Go and search his granaries; you'll find enough wheat to feed a regiment for six months.

THE BISHOP [*in a powerful voice*]. You lie. My storehouse is empty, and you know it.

NASTI. Why not see, my brothers? Why not see? Will you believe his mere word?

The citizens withdraw hastily. The men of the people remain with NASTI.

HEINRICH [*going to NASTI*]. Nasti!

NASTI. What do you want?

HEINRICH. You know that his storehouses are empty. You know he hardly touches food, that he gives all he receives to the poor.

NASTI. Are you for us or against us?

HEINRICH. I am for you when you suffer, but against you when you wish to shed the blood of the Church.

NASTI. You are for us when we are massacred, against us when we fight for our lives.

HEINRICH. I belong to the Church, Nasti.

NASTI. Drive in the door!

A group of men attack the door. The BISHOP prays in silence, erect, motionless.

HEINRICH [*throwing himself in front of the door*]. You will have to kill me . . .

A MAN OF THE PEOPLE. Kill you? Why?

They strike him, and throw him to the ground.

HEINRICH. You struck me! I loved you more than my own soul, and you struck me. Not the Bishop, Nasti, not the Bishop! Kill me if you will, but spare the Bishop.

NASTI. Why not? He has starved the people.

HEINRICH. You know that is false! You know it! You know it! If you desire to free your brothers from oppression and falsehood, why begin by telling them lies?

NASTI. I never lie.

HEINRICH. You are lying. There is no corn in his storehouse.

NASTI. What does it matter? There are precious stones and gold in his churches. I say he is responsible for the deaths of all those who have died of hunger at the feet of his Christs in marble and his ivory Virgins.

HEINRICH. It isn't the same. You may not be telling a lie, but you are not telling the truth, either.

NASTI. You speak the truth of your people—I speak the truth of our own. And if God loves the poor, it is our truth which He will make His own on the day of Judgment.

HEINRICH. Then let Him judge the Bishop. But do not shed the blood of the Church.

NASTI. I only recognize one church; the community of men.

HEINRICH. All men, then, all Christians joined together by love. But you will inaugurate your society by murder.

NASTI. It is too early to love all men. We shall buy that right by shedding blood.

HEINRICH. God has forbidden violence; it is an abomination.

NASTI. And Hell? Do the damned not suffer violence?

HEINRICH. God has said: He who takes the sword . . .

NASTI. By the sword shall he perish . . . Very well—let us perish by the sword. We shall perish, but our sons will see His

kingdom established on earth. Let me go. You are the same as all the others.

HEINRICH. Nasti! Nasti! Why cannot you love me? What have I done to you?

NASTI. You are a priest, and a priest remains a priest whatever he may do.

HEINRICH. I am one of yourselves. A poor man, and the son of a poor father.

NASTI. That proves you a traitor—that is all.

HEINRICH [*crying out*]. They have broken the door down! [*The door has indeed given way, and men are pouring into the palace. HEINRICH falls on his knees.*] Dear God, if Thou lovest mankind, if Thy face is not yet set against them, stretch forth Thy power, prevent this murder.

THE BISHOP. I have no need of your prayers, Heinrich! All you who know not what you do, receive my forgiveness. But you, priest apostate, shall inherit my curse.

HEINRICH. Ah! [*He falls to the ground.*]

THE BISHOP. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

He is struck down, and falls in a heap on the balcony.

NASTI [*to SCHMIDT*]. Now let him try and surrender the city.

A MAN OF THE PEOPLE [*appearing in the doorway*]. There was no corn in his storehouse.

NASTI. Then he has hidden it at the monastery.

A MAN [*shouting*]. To the monastery! To the monastery!

The crowd rushes after him, crying: "To the monastery! To the monastery!"

NASTI [*to SCHMIDT*]. Tonight, I shall try to cross the lines.

They go out. HEINRICH rises, looks around him. He is alone with the PROPHET. He sees the BISHOP, his eyes wide open, staring at him.

HEINRICH. Nasti! [*He tries to enter the palace, but the BISHOP stretches out his arm to prevent him.*] I will not enter. Lower your arm—lower your arm. If you are still alive, forgive me. Bitterness is heavy and belongs to the earth. Leave it on earth, and die the lighter. [*The BISHOP tries to speak.*] What? [*The BISHOP laughs.*] A traitor? I? Of course. They also call me traitor. But explain; how can I betray everybody at once?

[*The BISHOP is still laughing.*] I loved them. Oh, God! How I loved them. I loved them, but I lied to them. I lied to them by my silence. I held my peace! I held my peace! My lips were tight shut, my teeth clenched. They were dying like flies, and I still held my peace. When they cried for bread, I held out the crucifix. Can you feed a man with the cross? Ah! Lower your arm! We are both guilty. I wanted to share their poverty, suffer their cold, endure their hunger. They died all the same, didn't they? That was a way of betrayal. I made them believe the Church was poor. Now, rage has seized them, and they kill; they are damned; they will never know anything but Hell; first in this world, and tomorrow in the next. [*The BISHOP mutters unintelligibly.*] What could I have done? How could I have stopped them? [*He goes to the back, and looks down the street.*] The square is swarming with people; they are hammering on the door of the monastery with benches. The door is solid. It will hold until morning. I can do nothing. Nothing, nothing! Come, close your eyes, die bravely. (*The BISHOP drops a key.*) What key is that? What door does it open? A door in the palace! No? The cathedral? Yes? In the sacristy? No? The crypt? . . . Is it the door of the crypt? The one that is always closed? Well?

THE BISHOP. Underground. . . . Underground.

HEINRICH. Where does it lead? . . . Don't tell me! Please God, let him die before he tells me!

THE BISHOP. Outside.

HEINRICH. I refuse to pick it up. [*Pause.*] An underground passage leads from the crypt outside the walls. You want me to find Goetz and let him enter Worms by that passage? Never believe it.

THE BISHOP. Two hundred priests. Their lives are in your hands. [*Pause.*]

HEINRICH. I understand now why you laughed. It is a rich joke. Thank you, holy Bishop, thank you. The poor will massacre the priests, or Goetz will massacre the poor. Two hundred priests or twenty thousand men, you leave me a fair choice. The question is to know how many men equal a priest. And I have to decide; after all, I belong to the Church. I refuse to

pick it up. The priests will go straight to heaven. [*The BISHOP dies.*] . . . Unless they die like you, with rage in their hearts. Well, it is over with you. Farewell. Forgive him, Lord, as I have forgiven him. I refuse to pick it up. That's enough. No! No! No! [*He picks up the key.*]

THE PROPHET [*rising*]. Oh, Lord, let Thy will be done on earth.

The world is finished! Finished! Thy will be done on earth!

HEINRICH. Oh Lord, Thou hast cursed Cain and the children of Cain. Thy will be done. Thou hast permitted men to have their hearts torn, their intentions rotted, their actions diseased and stinking; Thy will be done. Oh Lord, Thou hast decreed that my fate should be a traitor's here on earth. Thy will be done. Thy will be done! Thy will be done! [*He goes out.*]

THE PROPHET. Chastise the flesh! Arise, arise. God is there!

The lights fade.

SCENE II

The outskirts of GOETZ's camp. Night. In the background, the town. An OFFICER appears and gazes towards the city. Another OFFICER enters immediately behind him.

SECOND OFFICER. What are you doing?

FIRST OFFICER. Watching the town. One fine day, it might fly away . . .

SECOND OFFICER. It won't fly away. We shan't have such luck. [*Turning abruptly.*] What's that?

TWO MEN appear, carrying a body on a stretcher, covered by a cloth. They are silent. The FIRST OFFICER goes to the stretcher, lifts the cover and lets it fall back into place.

FIRST OFFICER. To the river. At once!

SECOND OFFICER. Is he . . . ?

FIRST OFFICER. Black.

Pause. The two stretcher-bearers start to go. The sick man groans.

SECOND OFFICER. Wait. [*They stop.*]

FIRST OFFICER. What now?

SECOND OFFICER. He is still alive.

FIRST OFFICER. I don't want to know. To the river!

SECOND OFFICER [*to the stretcher-bearers*]. What regiment?

THE STRETCHER-BEARER. Blue Cross.

SECOND OFFICER. What! One of mine! About turn!

FIRST OFFICER. Are you mad? To the river!

SECOND OFFICER. I refuse to let my men be drowned like a litter of kittens.

The two officers stare at each other. The stretcher-bearers exchange amused looks, put the dying man down, and wait.

FIRST OFFICER. Dead 'or alive, if we keep him here he'll spread cholera through the entire army.

THIRD OFFICER [*entering*]. If it isn't cholera, it will be blind panic. Hurry! Throw him in the river!

THE STRETCHER-BEARER. He's groaning.

Pause. The SECOND OFFICER turns towards the stretcher-bearers furiously, draws his dagger and strikes the body.

SECOND OFFICER. That'll stop him groaning. Away! [*The two men go out.*] Three. Three since yesterday.

HERMANN [*entering*]. Four. One has just dropped in the middle of the camp.

SECOND OFFICER. Did the men see him?

HERMANN. In the middle of the camp, I tell you.

THIRD OFFICER. If I were in command, we'd raise the siege this very night.

HERMANN. Agreed. But you aren't in command.

FIRST OFFICER. We must speak to him.

HERMANN. Who do you suggest for the job? [*Silence. They look at each other.*] You will do as he commands.

SECOND OFFICER. Then it's all up with us. If the cholera spares us, we'll get our throats cut by our own men.

HERMANN. Unless he should be the one to die.

FIRST OFFICER. What of? Cholera?

HERMANN. Cholera, or other causes. [*Pause.*] I've been told the Archbishop wouldn't be displeased. [*Silence.*]

SECOND OFFICER. I couldn't.

FIRST OFFICER. Nor I. He sickens me so much I should be disgusted by the mere idea.

HERMANN. We're not asking you to do anything—except hold your peace and not interfere with others who are less disgusted than you are.

Silence. GOETZ and CATHERINE enter.

GOETZ [*entering*]. Have you any news for me? None? Not even that the troops are hungry? That cholera is decimating my ranks? Nothing to ask me? Not even to raise the siege? [*Pause.*] Are you all so afraid of me? [*They are silent.*]

CATHERINE. How they stare at you, my jewel. These men don't love you. I shouldn't be surprised if one day we find you on your back with a big knife sticking out of your guts.

GOETZ. Do you love me?

CATHERINE. God, NO!

GOETZ. Well, you don't seem to have killed me.

CATHERINE. Not because I haven't wanted to.

GOETZ. I know. You still dream lovely dreams. But I need not fear. The moment I die, you'll be set upon by twenty thousand men. And twenty thousand are rather too many, even for you.

CATHERINE. Better ten thousand than one you detest.

GOETZ. What I like in you is the horror you feel for me. [*To the officers.*] When would you like me to raise the siege? Thursday? Tuesday? Sunday? Well, my friends, it won't be Tuesday, Thursday or Sunday. I take the city tonight.

SECOND OFFICER. Tonight?

GOETZ. Tonight. [*Looking towards the town.*] There, in the distance, can you see a little blue light? Every night I watch it, and every night, at this moment, it goes out. Look! What did I tell you? I have seen it go out for the hundred and first and last time. Good night; we must kill the thing we love. And there are others . . . other lights that disappear. God's blood, there are men who go early to bed because they wish to rise early tomorrow. And there will be no tomorrow. A fine night, eh? Not very much light, but swarming with stars; later, the moon will rise. Just the kind of night when nothing happens. They have foreseen everything, accepted everything, even a massacre, but not for tonight. The sky is so pure that it fills them with confidence, this night belongs to them. [*Abruptly.*] What power! God, this city is mine, and I give it to Thee. In a moment I will set it on fire and let it blaze to Thy glory! [*To the officers.*] A priest has escaped from Worms and says he will help us enter the city. Captain Ulrich is questioning him.

THIRD OFFICER. Hm!

GOETZ. What is it?

THIRD OFFICER. I don't like traitors.

GOETZ. Don't you? Personally, I adore them.

An officer enters, pushing the priest guarded by a soldier.

HEINRICH [*falling on his knees in front of GOETZ*]. Torture me!

Tear off my nails! Skin me alive!

GOETZ *bursts out laughing.*

GOETZ [*falling on his knees beside the priest*]. Rip out my guts!

Roast me alive! Tear me in pieces! [*He rises.*] Well, that's broken the ice. [*To the captain.*] Who is he?

CAPTAIN. Heinrich, a priest from Worms. The one who is supposed to betray the city.

GOETZ. Well?

CAPTAIN. He says he won't tell us any more.

GOETZ [*going to HEINRICH*]. Why?

CAPTAIN. He says he has changed his mind.

THIRD OFFICER. Changed his mind! Holy Jesus! Break his teeth! Smash his jaw!

HEINRICH. Break my teeth! Smash my jaw!

GOETZ. What a lunatic! [*To HEINRICH.*] Why did you want to deliver the town to us?

HEINRICH. To save the priests the people want to murder.

GOETZ. And why have you changed your mind?

HEINRICH. I have seen the faces of your mercenaries.

GOETZ. So what?

HEINRICH. They were eloquent.

GOETZ. What did they say?

HEINRICH. That I should precipitate a massacre by trying to prevent a few murders.

GOETZ. You must have seen other soldiers. And you knew they never look very kind-hearted.

HEINRICH. The ones here look much worse than the others.

GOETZ. Pooh! Pooh! All soldiers look alike. What did you expect to find here? Angels?

HEINRICH. Men. And I would have asked those men to spare their fellow men. They would have entered the city having sworn to me to spare the lives of the inhabitants.

GOETZ. You would have taken my word?

HEINRICH. *Your word?* [*He looks at him.*] You are Goetz?

GOETZ. Yes.

HEINRICH. I . . . I thought I could trust you.

GOETZ [*surprised*]. Trust my word? [*Pause.*] I give it you. [*HEINRICH is silent.*] If you let us into the city, I swear I will spare the lives of the inhabitants.

HEINRICH. You want me to believe you?

GOETZ. Wasn't that your intention?

HEINRICH. Yes. Before I had seen you.

GOETZ [*beginning to laugh*]. Yes, yes, I know. Those who see me, rarely trust my word; I must look far too intelligent to keep it. But listen to me; take me at my word. Just to find out! Merely to find out. . . . I'm a Christian, after all. If I swore to you on the Bible? Let us go through with the game of blind trust. Isn't it your role as priest to use Good to tempt the wicked?

HEINRICH. Use good to tempt you? You'd enjoy it far too much!

GOETZ. You understand me. [*He looks at HEINRICH with a smile.*]

Leave us, all of you.

The officers and CATHERINE go out.

GOETZ [*with a kind of tenderness*]. You are sweating. How you are suffering!

HEINRICH. Not enough! Others suffer, but not I. God has allowed me to be haunted by the suffering of others without ever feeling those sufferings myself. Why are you looking at me?

GOETZ [*still tenderly*]. In my day I had just such a hypocrite's pan. I am looking at you, but I'm sorry for myself. We belong to the same race.

HEINRICH. That's not true! You betrayed your own brother. I shall never betray my own people.

GOETZ. You'll betray them this very night.

HEINRICH. Neither this night nor ever. [*Pause.*]

GOETZ [*in a detached voice*]. What will the people do to the priests? Hang them from the butchers' hooks?

HEINRICH [*with a cry*]. Be quiet! [*He recovers himself.*] Those are the horrors of war. I am only a humble priest, unable to prevent them.

GOETZ. Hypocrite! Tonight you have power of life and death over twenty thousand men.

HEINRICH. I refuse to accept that power. It comes from the Devil.

GOETZ. You refuse it, but you possess it all the same. [*HEINRICH tries to escape.*] Hola! What are you doing? If you run away it means you have agreed.

HEINRICH *returns, looks at GOETZ and begins to laugh.*

HEINRICH. You're right. Whether I kill myself or run away, it makes no difference. They are only ways of holding my peace. I am the elect of God.

GOETZ. Why not say rather you have the soul of a rat.

HEINRICH. It's the same thing; an elect is a man the finger of God has driven into a corner. [*Pause.*] Oh Lord, why hast Thou elected me?

GOETZ [*gently*]. This is the moment of your agony. I wanted to shorten it for you. Let me help you.

HEINRICH. Help me? You? When God is silent? [*Pause.*] Very well, I lied; I am not His elect. Why should I be? Who forced me to leave the city? Who ordered me to come and find you? I elected myself. When I came to ask your mercy for my brothers, I was already sure you would refuse. It wasn't the wickedness in your faces which made me change my mind, it was their reality. I dreamed of doing Evil, and when I saw you all, I understood I was going to do it in fact. Do you know I hate the poor?

GOETZ. Yes, I know.

HEINRICH. Why do they turn away when I stretch out my arms? Why do they suffer always so much more than I could ever suffer? Oh Lord, why hast Thou allowed the common people to exist? Or else, why didst Thou not make of me a monk? In a monastery, I should belong only to Thee. But how can I belong to Thee alone while there are men around me dying of hunger? [*To GOETZ.*] I came to deliver them all to you, and I hoped you would exterminate them and let me forget they ever existed.

GOETZ. So?

HEINRICH. So I have changed my mind. You shall never enter the city.

GOETZ. Supposing it were the will of God that you should make us enter? Listen to me; if you hold your tongue, the priests will die this very night; that's certain. But the people? Do you believe they will survive? I shall not raise the siege; within a month, every human creature in Worms will have died of hunger. You don't have to decide between their life or death, but to choose for them between two kinds of

death. Gutless coward—choose the swifter way. Do you know what they'll gain by it? If they die tonight before they kill the priests, they will keep their hands clean; everyone will meet again in heaven. If you choose the second way, after the pitiful weeks you leave them, you'll send them, all besmeared with blood, to the depths of Hell. Come now, priest; it was the Devil who whispered to you to spare their earthly lives merely to give them time to damn their souls for ever. [*Pause.*] Tell me how to get into the city.

HEINRICH. You are a dead man.

GOETZ. What?

HEINRICH. Your words are dead before they reach my ears, your face is not like those a man can meet in daylight. I know everything you will say, I can foresee all your movements. You are my own creation, and your thoughts come only at my bidding. I am dreaming, the world is dead, and the very air is full of sleep.

GOETZ. In that case, I am dreaming too. I can see your future so clearly, your present bores me. All we need to know now is which one of the two is living in the dream of the other.

HEINRICH. I never left the city! I never left it! We are acting in front of painted cloths. Come along, fine actor, give me my cues to speak. Do you know your own part? Mine is to say no. No! No! No! No! You say nothing? This is no more than an ordinary temptation, without much truth about it. What should I be doing in Goetz's camp? [*He gestures towards the city.*] If only those lights could extinguish themselves! What is the town doing over there, since I am within its walls! [*Pause.*] A temptation exists, but I do not know where it should be. [*To GOETZ.*] What I do know clearly is that I am going to see the Devil; when he is preparing to pull faces at me, the entertainment begins with a fantasy.

GOETZ. Have you seen the Devil already?

HEINRICH. More often than you have seen your own mother.

GOETZ. Do I look like him?

HEINRICH. You, my poor man? You are the jester.

GOETZ. What jester?

HEINRICH. There always has to be a jester. His role is to contradict me. [*Pause.*] I have won.

GOETZ. What?

HEINRICH. I have won. The last lamp has gone out; the devilish phantom of Worms has disappeared. We can relax. You will disappear in your turn, and this ridiculous temptation will come to an end. Darkness, darkness and night over the whole world. What peace.

GOETZ. Go on, priest, go on. I remember everything you are still going to say. A year ago . . . Oh yes, brother mine, I remember. How you would like to bring all that darkness into your head. How often I have desired it myself!

HEINRICH [*in a murmur*]. Where shall I be when I wake up?

GOETZ [*laughing suddenly*]. You are awake, you cheater, and you know it. Everything is real. Look at me, touch me, I am flesh and blood. Look, the moon is rising, your devilish city emerges from the shadows; look at the town. Is it a mirage? Come now! It is real stone, those are real ramparts, it is a real town with real inhabitants. And you—you are a real traitor.

HEINRICH. A man is a traitor only when he betrays. You can do what you like, I shall never betray the city.

GOETZ. A man will betray when he is already a traitor; you will betray the city. Come now, father, you are a traitor *already*; two paths lie before you, and you pretend you can follow both at the same time. So you are playing a double game, you are thinking in two languages. The suffering of the poor, you call that a test in Church latin, and in common German you translate it as iniquity. What more can happen to you if you help me enter the city? You will become the traitor you already are, that is all. A traitor who betrays is a traitor who accepts himself.

HEINRICH. How do you know this if your words aren't dictated by my will?

GOETZ. Because I am a traitor too. [*Pause.*] I have already covered the road you still have to take, and yet look at me; don't I seem to be flourishing?

HEINRICH. You are flourishing because you have followed your

nature. All bastards betray, it's a well-known fact. But I am not a bastard.

GOETZ [*hesitates before striking him, then controls himself*].

Usually those who call me bastard never do it twice.

HEINRICH. Bastard!

GOETZ. Father! Little father! Do try and be serious. Don't force me to cut off your ears; it won't help in the least because I shall leave you your tongue. [*Abruptly, he kisses HEINRICH.*] Hail, little brother! Welcome to bastardy! You are a bastard too! To engender you, the Clergy coupled with Misery; what joyless fornication. [*Pause.*] Naturally, bastards betray, what else should they do? I have been two people all my life; my mother gave herself to a cut-throat, and I am composed of two halves which do not fit together; each of those halves shrinks in horror from the other. Do you believe you are better served? A half-priest added to a half-peasant, that doesn't add up to a whole man. We *are* nothing and we *have* nothing. Every infant born in wedlock can inherit the earth without paying. But not you, and not I. Since the day of my birth, I have only seen the world through the keyhole; it's a fine little egg, neatly packed, where everyone fits the place God has assigned to him. But I give you my word we are not inside that world. We are outcasts! Reject this world that refuses you. Turn to Evil; you will see how light-hearted you feel. [*An OFFICER enters.*] What do you want?

THE OFFICER. An envoy from the Archbishop.

GOETZ. Send him in.

THE OFFICER. He brings news; the enemy leaves seven thousand dead. The rout is complete.

GOETZ. My brother? [*The OFFICER tries to whisper in his ear.*]

Keep your distance. Speak out.

THE OFFICER. Conrad is dead.

From this moment, HEINRICH watches GOETZ closely.

GOETZ. I see. Has his body been found?

THE OFFICER. Yes.

GOETZ. In what condition? Answer me!

THE OFFICER. Disfigured.

GOETZ. A sword-cut?

THE OFFICER. Wolves.

GOETZ. Wolves? Are there wolves?

THE OFFICER. The forest of Arnheim . . .

GOETZ. Very well. Let me once settle this little matter, and I march against Arnheim with the entire army. I will tear the hide from every wolf in the forest of Arnheim . . . Get out.

[*The OFFICER goes. Pause.*] Dead without absolution; the wolves have eaten his face, but as you see, I am still smiling.

HEINRICH [*softly*]. Why did you betray him?

GOETZ. Because I like things to be clear-cut. Priest, I created myself, I was only a bastard by birth, but the fair title of fratricide I owe to no one but myself. [*Pause.*] It belongs to me now, to me alone.

HEINRICH. What belongs to you?

GOETZ. The castle of Heidenstamm. They are finished, the Heidenstamms, finished, liquidated. I contain them all in myself, from Alberic the founder of the family, down to Conrad, the last male heir to the line. Look at me well, priest, I am a family mausoleum. Why are you laughing?

HEINRICH. I thought I should be the only one to see the Devil tonight, and now I know there will be two of us.

GOETZ. I don't give a damn for the Devil! He receives our souls, but it isn't he who condemns them. I refuse to deal with anyone but God. Monsters and saints exist only because of God. God sees me, priest, He knows I killed my brother, and His heart bleeds. Yes, indeed, oh Lord, I killed him. And what can You do against me? I have committed the worst of crimes, and the God of justice is powerless to punish me; He damned me more than fifteen years ago. There—enough for one day. This is a holiday. I'm going to have a drink.

HEINRICH [*going to him*]. Here. [*He brings a key out of his pocket, and holds it out to GOETZ.*]

GOETZ. What is this?

HEINRICH. A key.

GOETZ. What key?

HEINRICH. The key to Worms.

GOETZ. Enough for one day, I said. A brother—good God!

You don't bury a brother every day; I have the right to give myself a holiday until tomorrow.

HEINRICH [*bearing down on him*]. Coward!

GOETZ [*stopping*]. If I take this key, I burn everything.

HEINRICH. At the bottom of this ravine, there is a white boulder.

At its base, hidden among brushwood, there is an opening.

Follow the passage underground, and you will find a door you can open with this.

GOETZ. How they'll love you, your little brothers of the poor!

How they're going to bless you!

HEINRICH. That's no concern of mine any more. I am lost, by my own choice. But I leave my poor in your hands, bastard.

Now, it is you who have to choose.

GOETZ. You said just now you had only to see my face . . .

HEINRICH. I had not seen it closely enough.

GOETZ. And what do you see in it at this moment?

HEINRICH. That you hate yourself.

GOETZ. It's true, but don't put your trust in that! I have hated myself for fifteen years. So what? Don't you understand that

Evil is my reason for living? Give me that key. [*He takes it.*]

Well, little priest, you will have lied to the very end. You thought you had found a way of disguising your treason from yourself. But once and for all, you have finally betrayed. You have betrayed Conrad.

HEINRICH. Conrad?

GOETZ. Don't be afraid. You resemble me so closely that I took you for myself. [*He goes.*]

CURTAIN

SCENE III

GOETZ'S tent.

Through the opening we can see the town in the distance, bathed in moonlight.

HERMANN enters and tries to hide under the camp bed. His head and body disappear, but we can still see his enormous behind.

CATHERINE enters, goes to him and gives him a kick. He rises, terrified. She springs away from him, laughing.

HERMANN. If you call out . . .

CATHERINE. If I call out, you'll be discovered, and Goetz will skin you alive. Much better talk this over. What are you going to do to him.

HERMANN. What you should have done, harlot, if you had had any blood in your veins—what you should have done a very long time ago. Get out of here! Go for a walk, and thank God that a man has taken on your job for you. D'you hear?

CATHERINE. What will become of me, if he dies? The whole camp will fall upon me.

HERMANN. We'll help you escape.

CATHERINE. Will you give me some money?

HERMANN. A little.

CATHERINE. Give me my dowry and I'll enter a convent.

HERMANN [*laughing*]. A convent—you! If you want to live in a community, why not enter a brothel; with the talent you have between your thighs you'd earn a fortune in no time. Make up your mind. I only ask you to hold your tongue.

CATHERINE. My silence—you can count on that; at all events, I shan't betray you. When it comes to cutting his throat . . . that depends.

HERMANN. Depends on what?

CATHERINE. We don't share the same interests, pretty captain. A man's honour can be redeemed at the point of a knife. But a woman—he has made me a whore, and I am much more difficult to redeem. [*Pause.*] Tonight the city will be taken. The war is over, everyone can go home. When he

arrives, in a few minutes, I'll ask him what he intends to do with me. If he keeps me . . .

HERMANN. Goetz keep you? You're mad. What do you expect him to do with you?

CATHERINE. If he keeps me you shan't touch him.

HERMANN. And if he sends you away?

CATHERINE. Then he is all yours. If I cry out: 'You asked for it', come out of hiding, and he'll be at your mercy.

HERMANN. I don't want my whole plan to depend on a question of f . . .

CATHERINE [*who for a moment or two has been watching outside*]. Then fall on your knees and ask him to forgive you. Here he is.

HERMANN *runs to hide himself*. CATHERINE *begins to laugh*.

GOETZ [*entering*]. Why are you laughing?

CATHERINE. I was laughing at my dreams; I saw you lying dead with a knife in your back. [*Pause.*] So, he's talked?

GOETZ. Who?

CATHERINE. The priest.

GOETZ. What priest? Oh yes! Yes, of course.

CATHERINE. And you'll do it tonight?

GOETZ. What's it to do with you? Take off my boots. [*She takes them off.*] Conrad is dead.

CATHERINE. I know. Everyone in the camp knows.

GOETZ. Give me a drink. We must celebrate. [*She pours his wine.*] Drink too.

CATHERINE. I don't want to drink.

GOETZ. God's blood! Drink, this is a holiday.

CATHERINE. A fine holiday that begins with a murder and ends with a holocaust.

GOETZ. The finest holiday in my life. Tomorrow, I leave for my estates.

CATHERINE [*surprised*]. So soon?

GOETZ. So soon! For thirty years I have dreamed of this moment. I shall not wait a single extra day. [CATHERINE *seems upset.*] Don't you feel well?

CATHERINE [*pulling herself together*]. It was hearing you talk of *your* estates while Conrad's body is still warm.'

GOETZ. They have been mine in secret for thirty years. [*He raises his glass.*] I drink to my lands and my belongings. Drink with me. [*She raises her glass in silence.*] Say: to your estates!

CATHERINE. No.

GOETZ. Why not, bitch?

CATHERINE. Because they are not yours. Will you cease to be a bastard because you assassinated your brother? [GOETZ begins to laugh, aims a blow at her, which she dodges and sinks on the bed, laughing.] Estates pass from father to son by inheritance.

GOETZ. I'd have to be paid a good price before I'd accept them that way. Nothing belongs to me except what I take. Come, drink the toast or I'll have to lose my temper.

CATHERINE. To your estates! To your castles!

GOETZ. And may there be legions of outraged phantoms in the corridors at night.

CATHERINE. That's true, mountebank. What would you do without an audience? I drink to your phantoms. [*Pause.*] So, my sweetheart, nothing belongs to you except what you take by force?

GOETZ. Nothing.

CATHERINE. But, apart from your manors and your domains, you possess a priceless treasure, though you don't seem aware of it.

GOETZ. What treasure?

CATHERINE. Me, my darling, me. Didn't you take me by force? [*Pause.*] What are you going to do with me? Tell me.

GOETZ [*looking at her reflectively*]. I'll take you with me.

CATHERINE. You will? Why? [*She takes a hesitating step towards him.*] To set a harlot at the head of a noble house?

GOETZ. To set a harlot in the bed of my noble mother.

CATHERINE. And if I refuse? If I didn't want to go with you?

GOETZ. I sincerely hope you don't want to come.

CATHERINE. Ah! You'll carry me away by force. That's better. I should have been ashamed to follow you of my own free will. [*Pause.*] Why do you always want to force what might perhaps be given you with good grace?

GOETZ. To make sure I should be given it with bad grace. [*He goes to her.*] Look at me, Catherine. What are you hiding?

CATHERINE [*quickly*]. I? Nothing!

GOETZ. For some time now I've seen a change in you. You still hate me passionately, don't you?

CATHERINE. Yes, indeed, with all my strength!

GOETZ. You still have dreams that somebody will kill me?

CATHERINE. Every night.

GOETZ. You aren't forgetting it was I who ruined and soiled you?

CATHERINE. I can never forget.

GOETZ. And you submit to my caresses with repugnance?

CATHERINE. They make me shudder.

GOETZ. Good. If you ever get the idea of wanting to come to my arms, I shall drive you away immediately.

CATHERINE. But . . .

GOETZ. I shall accept nothing ever again, not even favours from a woman.

CATHERINE. Why?

GOETZ. Because I have been given enough. For twenty years, everything has been given to me most graciously, down to the very air I breathe; a bastard has to kiss the hand that feeds him. Oh! How I am going to give back in my turn! How generous I am going to be!

FRANZ [*entering*]. The Envoy of his Excellency is here.

GOETZ. Send him in.

THE BANKER [*entering*]. I am Foucre.

GOETZ. I am Goetz. This is Catherine.

THE BANKER. Delighted to meet so great a captain.

GOETZ. And I to salute so rich a banker.

THE BANKER. I am the bearer of three excellent pieces of news.

GOETZ. The Archbishop is victorious, my brother is dead, his lands and fortune belong to me. Isn't that it?

THE BANKER. Exactly. And so, I . . .

GOETZ. Let us celebrate. D'you want a drink?

THE BANKER. Unfortunately, my stomach won't take wine.

I . . .

GOETZ. Do you want this handsome slut? She is yours.

THE BANKER. I shouldn't know what to do with her. I am too old.

GOETZ. Poor Catherine, he doesn't want you. [*To the BANKER.*]

Do you prefer young boys? You'll find one in your tent this evening.

THE BANKER. No. no! No boys! Most definitely, no boys! I . . .

GOETZ. What d'you say to a heavy dragoon? I have one six feet high, covered with hair . . . a real gorilla.

THE BANKER. No! No! Most certainly not . . .

GOETZ. In that case, we'd better give you glory. [*He shouts.*]

Franz! [*FRANZ appears.*] Franz, take this gentleman for a tour of the camp, and see that the soldiers shout, 'Long live the banker!' tossing their caps in the air. [*FRANZ exits.*]

THE BANKER. I am much obliged, but I wanted to talk to you immediately. In private.

GOETZ [*surprised*]. What have you been doing ever since you came in? [*Nodding towards CATHERINE.*] Oh! That one . . .

She's a domestic animal; speak without fear.

THE BANKER. His Eminence has always been most peaceful, and you know your late brother was responsible for beginning this war . . .

GOETZ. My brother! [*Violently.*] If that old idiot hadn't driven him to extremes . . .

THE BANKER. Sir, sir . . .

GOETZ. Yes. Forget what I just said, but you'll oblige me by leaving my brother out of this. After all, I am wearing his mourning.

THE BANKER. Therefore, his Eminence has decided to mark the return of peace by measures of exceptional clemency.

GOETZ. Bravo! Is he opening the prisons?

THE BANKER. The prisons? Good heavens, no!

GOETZ. Does he wish me to remit the punishments of any soldiers I have sentenced myself?

THE BANKER. He desires it, certainly. But the amnesty he envisages has a much more general character. He wants to extend it to his subjects in Worms.

GOETZ. Ah! Ah!

THE BANKER. He has decided not to punish them for a momentary deflection.

GOETZ. It seems an excellent idea.

THE BANKER. Can we be in agreement so soon?

GOETZ. Entirely in agreement. [*The BANKER rubs his hands.*]

THE BANKER. Well, well, that's perfect; you are a reasonable man. When are you thinking of lifting the siege?

GOETZ. Tomorrow it will be all over.

THE BANKER. Tomorrow—that seems a little too soon. His Eminence desires to enter into negotiations with the besieged.

If your army remains under their walls a few days longer, the ambassadors will find their task facilitated.

GOETZ. I see. And who is going to negotiate?

THE BANKER. I am.

GOETZ. When?

THE BANKER. Tomorrow.

GOETZ. Impossible.

THE BANKER. Why?

GOETZ. Catherine! Shall we tell him?

CATHERINE. Of course, my jewel.

GOETZ. Then you tell him. I dare not, it will cause him too much pain.

CATHERINE. Tomorrow, Banker, all those people will be dead.

THE BANKER. Dead?

GOETZ. All of them.

THE BANKER. All dead?

GOETZ. All dead. This very night. You see this key? It opens the city. One hour from now, the massacre begins.

THE BANKER. Everyone? Including the rich?

GOETZ. Including the rich.

THE BANKER. But you approved the Archbishop's clemency . . .

GOETZ. I still approve it. He has been sinned against, and he is a priest; two reasons to forgive the offenders. But why should I forgive them? The inhabitants of Worms haven't sinned against me. No, no, I am a soldier, therefore I must do a soldier's work. I will kill them according to my office, and the Archbishop will forgive them, according to his own.

Pause. Then the BANKER begins to laugh. CATHERINE laughs, then GOETZ begins to laugh too.

THE BANKER [*laughing*]. I see you like laughing.

GOETZ [*laughing*]. It's the only thing I do like.

CATHERINE. He's very witty, isn't he?

THE BANKER. Most witty. He's managing this business excellently.

GOETZ. What business?

THE BANKER. For thirty years, I have run my business on one principle; that interest directs the world. When they come to see me, men justify their behaviour by citing the most exalted motives. I listen to them with one ear, and I say to myself—find where their interest lies.

GOETZ. And when you found it?

THE BANKER. Then we could talk.

GOETZ. Have you found mine?

THE BANKER. Oh, really!

GOETZ. What is it?

THE BANKER. Gently, gently. You belong to a category which is very difficult to handle. With a man like you, one has to proceed one step at a time.

GOETZ. What category?

THE BANKER. You are an idealist.

GOETZ. What the hell's that?

THE BANKER. I divide men into three categories; those who have a great deal of money, those who have none at all, and those who have only a little. The first want to keep what they have; their interest is to maintain order; the second want to take what they have not; their interest is to destroy the present order and establish another which would be profitable to them. Both of them are realists, men with whom one can come to an understanding. The third want to overturn our social order to take what they have not, while at the same time making quite sure no one takes away what they already have. Therefore, they conserve in fact what they destroy in desire, or rather, they destroy in fact what they are only pretending to conserve. Those people are idealists.

GOETZ. How are we to cure the poor?

THE BANKER. By transferring them to another social level. If you were to make them rich, they would defend the established order.

GOETZ. Then you should make me rich. What do you offer?

THE BANKER. Conrad's possessions.

GOETZ. You've already given them to me.

THE BANKER. Exactly. Only remember you owe them to the bounty of his Eminence.

GOETZ. Believe me, I shall not forget. What else?

THE BANKER. Your brother was in debt.

GOETZ. The poor fellow! [*He crosses himself, and sobs nervously.*]

THE BANKER. What's the matter?

GOETZ. Very little; a touch of family feeling. So, you say he was in debt.

THE BANKER. We could pay those debts for you.

GOETZ. That is not to my interest because I had no intention of acknowledging them. You should address yourself to his creditors.

THE BANKER. An annual income of one thousand ducats?

GOETZ. And my soldiers? Supposing they refuse to go away empty-handed?

THE BANKER. Another thousand to distribute among them. Is it enough?

GOETZ. Far too much.

THE BANKER. Then we are agreed?

GOETZ. No.

THE BANKER. Two thousand ducats annually? Three thousand? I can go no higher.

GOETZ. Who is asking you to?

THE BANKER. Then what do you want?

GOETZ. To take and destroy the city.

THE BANKER. I don't mind if you take it, but good heavens, why should you want to destroy it?

GOETZ. Because everyone else wants me to spare it.

THE BANKER [*stunned*]. I must have been wrong . . .

GOETZ. Indeed yes! You couldn't discover my interest! Come

now, what can it be? Think! Think hard! But hurry; you must find it within the next hour; if between now and then you haven't discovered what strings make the marionette move, I shall have you dragged through the streets, and you will see the fires of destruction lighted one after the other.

THE BANKER. You are betraying the Archbishop's trust.

GOETZ. Betrayal? Trust? You are all the same, you realists; when you don't know what else to say, you have to borrow the language of us idealists.

THE BANKER. If you destroy the city, you will never possess your brother's lands.

GOETZ. Keep them! My interest, banker, was to have them and to live there. But I'm not so sure men act only by their interest. Keep the lands, I tell you, and let his Eminence stuff them up. I sacrificed my brother to the Archbishop, and now you're expecting me to spare twenty thousand lives? I shall offer the inhabitants of Worms to the spirit of Conrad; they will be roasted alive in his honour. As for the domain of Heidenstamm, let the Archbishop go into retirement there, if he likes, and spend the rest of his days studying agriculture; he will have need to, for I intend to ruin him this very night. *[Pause.]* Franz! *[FRANZ appears.]* Take this venerable realist, see that all honours are shown him, and when he is under his tent, make sure that his hands and feet are securely tied.

THE BANKER. No! No, no, no!

GOETZ. What's the matter?

THE BANKER. I suffer from atrocious rheumatism. Your cords will be worse than murder. Shall I give you my word of honour not to leave my tent?

GOETZ. Your word of honour? It's in your interest to give it, but quite soon, it will be in your interest not to keep it. Take him away, Franz, and see that the knots are pulled tight.

FRANZ *and the banker go out. Immediately there are cries of "Hurrah for the Banker" at first near at hand, then dying away in the distance.*

GOETZ. "Hurrah for the banker!" [*He bursts out laughing.*]

Farewell the estates! Farewell the fields and rivers! Farewell to the castle!

CATHERINE [*laughing*]. Farewell the estates! Farewell to the castle! Farewell the family portraits!

GOETZ. Don't regret anything! We would have been bored to death. [*Pause.*] The old fool! [*Pause.*] Ah! He shouldn't have defied me.

CATHERINE. Are you very unhappy?

GOETZ. Hold your tongue! [*Pause.*] To do Evil must in the long run harm everyone. Including the one who sets it in motion.

CATHERINE [*timidly*]. Supposing you didn't take the city?

GOETZ. If I don't take it, you'll be mistress of a castle.

CATHERINE. I wasn't thinking of that.

GOETZ. Of course not. You needn't worry; I shall take it.

CATHERINE. But why?

GOETZ. Because it is evil.

CATHERINE. Why should you want to do evil?

GOETZ. Because Good has been done already.

CATHERINE. By whom?

GOETZ. By God the Father. I have to invent. [*He calls.*] Ho, there! Captain Schoene. At once.

GOETZ *stands at the entrance to the tent, and looks out into the night.*

CATHERINE. What are you looking at?

GOETZ. The city. [*Pause.*] I was wondering if that night there was a moon too . . .

CATHERINE. When? Where? . . .

GOETZ. Last year, when I was about to take Halle. It was a night very like this one. I stood at the entrance to my tent and watched the belfry rising above the ramparts. In the morning, we took the place by assault. [*He comes back to her*] In any case, I'll get out of here before it begins to stink. Saddle and spurs and away.

CATHERINE. You . . . you're going away?

GOETZ. Tomorrow, before midday, without a word to anyone.

CATHERINE. And me?

GOETZ. You? Stop your nose and pray that the wind doesn't

blow from that quarter. [*The CAPTAIN enters.*] Two thousand men under arms; the Wolfmar and Ulrich regiments. Have them ready to follow me in half-an-hour. The rest of the army stand to arms. Put out all lights, and make your preparations in silence. [*The CAPTAIN goes out. Until the end of the act, there are muffled sounds of preparation.*] So you see, sweetheart, you will never be mistress of a castle.

CATHERINE. I'm afraid not.

GOETZ. Very disappointed?

CATHERINE. I never believed it would happen.

GOETZ. Why not?

CATHERINE. Because I know you.

GOETZ [*violently*]. You know me? [*He stops short and laughs.*]

After all, I suppose I am predictable too. [*Pause.*] You must have your own ideas about how to manage me; you watch me, you look at me . . .

CATHERINE. A cat can look at a king.

GOETZ. Yes, but the cat sees the king with the head of a cat.

What do you see me as? A cat? A mackerel? A cod? [*He looks at her.*] Come on the bed.

CATHERINE. No.

GOETZ. I said come. I want to make love.

CATHERINE. I've never see you so pressing. [*He takes her by the shoulders.*] Nor so depressed. What's the matter?

GOETZ. It's the Goetz with the fish-eyes who is beckoning me.

He and I want to get together. Besides, agony of mind can be resolved in physical love.

CATHERINE. Your mind is in agony?

GOETZ. Yes. [*He goes to sit on the bed, turning his back on the hidden officer.*] Come here!

CATHERINE goes to him, and pulling him up roughly, sits down in his place.

CATHERINE. I'm here, yes, and I belong to you. First of all, tell me what will happen to me?

GOETZ. When?

CATHERINE. After tomorrow.

GOETZ. How the hell should I know? Whatever you like.

CATHERINE. In other words, I am to become a harlot.

GOETZ. I'd say it was the best solution, wouldn't you?

CATHERINE. Supposing I don't want that?

GOETZ. Find some poor specimen to marry you.

CATHERINE. What will you do—after tomorrow?

GOETZ. Stick to my soldiering. They tell me the Hussites are nervous; I'll go and give them a few knocks.

CATHERINE. Take me with you.

GOETZ. What for?

CATHERINE. There will be times when you'll need a woman; when the moon will be shining, and you'll have to take a city; a night when you'll be in anguish, and you'll want to make love.

GOETZ. All women are alike. My men will bring them to me in dozens if the urge should ever take me.

CATHERINE [*abruptly*]. I won't have it!

GOETZ. You won't have what?

CATHERINE. I can be twenty women, a hundred, if you like, all the other women in one. Take me up behind you. I weigh very little, your horse will never feel me. I want to be your brothel! [*She presses herself to him.*]

GOETZ. What's come over you? [*Pause. He looks at her. Then suddenly.*] Get out. I'm ashamed of you.

CATHERINE. [*imploringly*]. Goetz!

GOETZ. I won't allow you to look at me like that. You must be completely rotten to dare love me after all I have done to you.

CATHERINE [*crying out*]. I don't love you! I swear I don't love you! Even if I did, you'd never know of my love! What difference does it make if someone loves you, provided they never tell you!

GOETZ. What business have I to be loved? If you love me, you'll be the one who enjoys it. Get out of here, you bitch! I won't let anyone profit at my expense.

CATHERINE [*crying out*]. Goetz! Goetz! Don't send me away! I have no one in the world.

GOETZ *tries to throw her out of the tent. She clings to his hands.*

GOETZ. Will you get out of here!

CATHERINE. You asked for it. Goetz! You asked for it! [HER-

MANN *rushes out of hiding, and springs forward, his dagger raised.*] Look behind you! Ah!

GOETZ [*turns round and catches HERMANN'S wrist*]. Franz! [*Two soldiers enter. He laughs.*] At any rate, I have managed to drive someone to desperation.

HERMANN [*to CATHERINE*]. Rotten bitch! Filthy traitor!

GOETZ [*to CATHERINE*]. You knew about this? I like that better; I like that very much better. [*He strokes her chin.*] Take him away . . . I'll decide what to do with him later.

The soldiers go out, taking HERMANN. Pause.

CATHERINE. What will you do to him?

GOETZ. I can never be angry with anyone who tries to kill me. I understand their point of view too well. I'll have him put in the cellar, that's all— like the fat barrel of beer he is.

CATHERINE. And what will you do to me?

GOETZ. Yes. I suppose I'll have to punish you too.

CATHERINE. There's no real obligation.

GOETZ. Oh yes, there is. [*Pause.*] A great many of my soldiers have dry lips when they see you. I'll make them a present of you. Afterwards, if you're still alive, we'll choose a nice squint-eyed, pock-marked bastard, and the priest of Worms can marry you to him.

CATHLRINE. I don't believe you.

GOETZ. No?

CATHERINE. No. You're not . . . You'll never do it. I'm quite sure! I'm absolutely sure!

GOETZ. I'll never do it? [*He calls.*] Franz! Franz! [*FRANZ appears with two soldiers.*] Take away the bride, Franz!

FRANZ. What bride?

GOETZ. Catherine. You'll marry her first to everyone, with tremendous pomp. Afterwards . . . [*NASTI enters, goes to GOETZ and strikes him on the ear.*] Hey, peasant, what are you doing?

NASTI. I struck you on the ear.

GOETZ. I felt it. [*Holding him.*] Who are you?

NASTI. The baker, Nasti.

GOETZ [*to the soldiers*]. Is this Nasti?

THE SOLDIER^s. Yes. That's him.

GOETZ. A fine prize, by God.

NASTI. I am not your prize. I surrendered myself.

GOETZ. Just as you like; it comes to the same thing. God is overwhelming me with presents today. [*He looks at NASTI.*]

So this is the famous Nasti, lord of every beggar in Germany.

You are exactly as I imagined you; as depressing as virtue.

NASTI. Don't believe I am virtuous. Our sons will be virtuous if we shed enough blood to give them the right to become so.

GOETZ. I see. You are a prophet.

NASTI. In common with all men.

GOETZ. Indeed? Then I am a prophet too?

NASTI. All words are God's witness; all words reveal all to all people.

GOETZ. The devil! I'll have to be careful of what I say.

NASTI. To what end? You cannot prevent yourself revealing everything.

GOETZ. I see. Very well, answer my questions and try not to tell me quite everything, or we'll never come to the end. So, you are Nasti, prophet and baker.

NASTI. I am.

GOETZ. I heard you were in Worms.

NASTI. I escaped.

GOETZ. This evening?

NASTI. Yes.

GOETZ. To talk to me?

NASTI. To find reinforcements and attack you in the rear.

GOETZ. Excellent idea. What made you change your mind?

NASTI. As I was crossing the camp, I heard a traitor had betrayed the city.

GOETZ. You must have had a bad quarter of an hour.

NASTI. Yes. Very bad.

GOETZ. So then?

NASTI. I was sitting on a rock behind your tent. I saw the tent light up and shadows move. At that moment, I received an order to go to you and speak to you.

GOETZ. Who gave you that order?

NASTI. Who do you suppose it could be?

GOETZ. Who indeed? Happy man; you receive your orders, and you know who has given them to you. Curiously enough, I've had my orders too—to take and burn Worms. But I never know who commands me. [*Pause.*] Was it God who commanded you to strike me over the ear?

NASTI. Yes.

GOETZ. Why?

NASTI. I don't know. Perhaps to loosen the wax which prevents you from hearing.

GOETZ. You have forfeited your own head in consequence. Did God tell you that too?

NASTI. God had no need to tell me. I have always known how I should finish.

GOETZ. Of course—you're a prophet. I had forgotten.

NASTI. I don't need to be a prophet; we others, we have only two ways to die. Those who are resigned, die of hunger. Those who are not resigned, die by hanging. At twelve years old, you already know if you are resigned or not.

GOETZ. Fine. Well, now you should kneel before me.

NASTI. What for?

GOETZ. To beg for mercy, I suppose. Didn't God command you to do that? [*FRANZ puts on his boots.*]

NASTI. No. You have no mercy, and God has none either. Why should I ask for your mercy when, by morning, I shall have no mercy for others?

GOETZ [*rising*]. Then what the hell did you come here for?

NASTI. To open your eyes, my brother.

GOETZ. Oh, night of wonders! All is in motion, God walks upon earth, my tent is a heaven filled with shooting stars, and here is the fairest of all; Nasti, the prophet from the bakehouse, sent here to open my eyes. Who would have believed that heaven and earth would make so much ado for one town of twenty thousand inhabitants? By the way, baker, who assures you that you aren't a victim of the Devil?

NASTI. When the sun dazzles your eyes, who proves to you that it isn't night?

GOETZ. At night, when you dream of the sun, who proves to you that it isn't morning? Supposing I had seen God too?

Eh? Ah! It would be sunlight against sunlight. [*Pause.*] I hold you all in my hands, all of you; this harlot who wanted to kill me, the envoy of the Archbishop, and you, the king of the beggars. God's finger has revealed the conspiracy, the guilty are unmasked; better still, it was one of God's ministers who brought me the keys of the city with His compliments.

NASTI [*in a changed voice, imperative and brusque*]. One of God's ministers? Which one?

GOETZ. What do you care since you are about to die? Come now, admit that God is on my side.

NASTI. On your side? No. You are not a man of God. At the very most you are His lackey.

GOETZ. How do you know?

NASTI. The real men of God destroy or construct. You merely conserve.

GOETZ. I?

NASTI. You bring about disorder. And disorder is the best servant of the established power. You weakened the entire order of chivalry the day you betrayed Conrad, and you'll be weakening the burghers the day you destroy Worms. Who will profit by your action? The rulers. You serve the rulers, Goetz, and you will serve them whatever you do; all destruction confuses; weakens the weak, enriches the rich, increases the power of the powerful.

GOETZ. Therefore, I am doing the opposite of what I intend? [*Ironically.*] Happily, God has sent you to enlighten me. What do you propose?

NASTI. A new alliance.

GOETZ. Oh! A new betrayal? Isn't that charming; at all events, I am used to it. It won't be much change for me. But if I must ally myself not with the burghers, the knights or the princes, I don't quite see who I am to join with.

NASTI. Take the city, massacre the rich and the priests, give everything to the poor, raise an army of peasants and drive out the Archbishop. Tomorrow the whole country will march behind you.

GOETZ [*amazed*]. You expect me to join the poor?

NASTI. With the people, yes! With the plebs from the city, and the peasants from the fields.

GOETZ. What an extraordinary idea!

NASTI. They are your natural allies. If you want to destroy in good earnest, raze the palaces and cathedrals erected by the power of Satan, shatter the obscene pagan statues, burn the thousands of books which spread diabolic knowledge, suppress gold and silver, come to us, be one of us. Without us, you are turning in a circle, you hurt no one but yourself. With us, you will become the scourge of God.

GOETZ. What will you do to the burghers?

NASTI. Take their possessions from them, to cover the naked and feed the hungry.

GOETZ. The priests?

NASTI. Send them back to Rome.

GOETZ. And the nobles?

NASTI. Cut off their heads.

GOETZ. And when we have driven out the Archbishop?

NASTI. It will be time to build the city of God.

GOETZ. On what foundations?

NASTI. That all men are brothers and equals. That all are in God and God is in all; the Holy Ghost speaks through all mouths, all men are priests and prophets, all men can baptise, conduct marriages, interpret God's will and remit sins; all men live openly on earth in the sight of men, and solitarily within their souls in the sight of God.

GOETZ. It won't be easy to laugh in your city.

NASTI. Can you laugh at what you love? Our one law will be the law of Love.

GOETZ. And what shall I be within your city?

NASTI. The equal of all men.

GOETZ. Supposing I don't want to be your equal?

NASTI. The equal of all men or the lackey of the princes. Choose.

GOETZ. Your proposition is very honest, baker. Only, you see, the people bore me to death; they hate everything I enjoy.

NASTI. What do you enjoy?

GOETZ. Everything you want to destroy; statues, luxury, war.

NASTI. The moon is not yours, my poor misguided friend, and you've been fighting all your life so that the nobles may possess it.

GOETZ [*deeply and sincerely*]. But I love the nobles.

NASTI. You? You assassinate them.

GOETZ. Nonsense! I assassinate them a little, from time to time, because their wives are fertile, and they make ten more for every one I may have killed. But I won't let you hang them all. Why should I help you put out the sun, and extinguish the earthly torches? We should create a polar night.

NASTI. Then you will go on being nothing but a useless uproar.

GOETZ. Useless, yes. Useless to men. But what do I care for men? God hears me, it is God I am deafening, and that is enough for me, for He is the only enemy worthy of my talents. There is only one God, the phantoms and myself. It is God I shall crucify this night, through you, and through twenty thousand men, because His suffering is infinite, and it renders infinite those whom He causes to suffer. This city will go up in flames. God knows that. At this moment, He is afraid, I can feel it; I feel His eyes on my hands, His breath on my hair, the tears of His angels. He is saying to Himself, 'Perhaps Goetz will not dare . . .' exactly as if He were no more than a man. Weep, weep, pretty angels; I shall dare. In a few moments, I will march in His fear and His anger. The city shall blaze; the soul of the Lord is a corridor of mirrors, the fire will see itself reflected in a thousand glasses. Then, I shall know that I am a monster in all purity. [*To FRANZ.*] Bring me my sword.

NASTI [*in a changed voice*]. Spare the poor. The Archbishop is rich, you can amuse yourself ruining him, but the poor, Goetz, it isn't amusing to make them suffer.

GOETZ. No, indeed, it is far from amusing.

NASTI. Well, then?

GOETZ. I have my orders, I have my orders too.

NASTI. I implore you on my knees.

GOETZ. I thought you were forbidden to pray to men.

NASTI. Nothing is forbidden when it is a question of saving lives.

GOETZ. It looks to me, prophet, as though God had led you into an ambush. [NASTI *shrugs his shoulders.*] You know what is going to happen to you?

NASTI. Torture and hanging, yes. I told you I have always known.

GOETZ. Torture and hanging . . . Hanging and torture. . . . how monotonous. The boring part of Evil is that one grows accustomed to it—you need genius to invent. Tonight, I don't feel at all inspired.

CATHERINE. Let him have a confessor.

GOETZ. A . . .

CATHERINE. You cannot let him die without absolution.

GOETZ. Nasti! There's the stroke of genius. Of course, my dear man, of course you shall have a confessor! It's my duty as a Christian. Besides, I have a surprise for you. [*To FRANZ.*] Go and fetch the priest . . . [*To NASTI.*] There's an act such as I love; with facets. Is it good? Is it evil? The understanding is confused.

NASTI. No Papist is going to soil me.

GOETZ. You'll be tortured until you confess your sins—it will be entirely for your own good.

Enter HEINRICH.

HEINRICH. You have done me all the harm you could. Leave me in peace.

GOETZ. What was he doing?

FRANZ. Sitting in the dark, shaking his head.

HEINRICH. What do you want of me?

GOETZ. Put you to work at your profession. You must marry this woman immediately. As for this man, you must give him the last sacraments.

HEINRICH. This man? . . . [*He sees NASTI.*] Ah! . . .

GOETZ. [*pretending to be surprised*]. You know each other?

NASTI. Is this the minister of God who gave you the key?

HEINRICH. No! No, no!

GOETZ. Priest, aren't you ashamed to lie?

HEINRICH. Nasti! [*NASTI will not look at him.*] I couldn't let them massacre the priests. [*NASTI is silent. HEINRICH goes to him.*]

Tell me, could I let them be killed? [*Pause. He turns and goes to GOETZ.* Well? Why must I hear his confession?

GOETZ. Because he is going to be hanged.

HEINRICH. Then do it quickly! Hang him quickly! And find him another confessor.

GOETZ. It must be you, or no one.

HEINRICH. Then it will be no one. [*He turns to go.*]

GOETZ. Hey! Hey! HEINRICH *stops.*] Can you allow him to die without confession?

HEINRICH [*returning slowly*]. No, jester, no; you are right. I cannot do that. [*To NASTI.*] Kneel. [*Pause.*] You will not? My brother, my sins do not reflect on the Church, and it is in the name of the Church that I can remit your sins. Would you like me to make public confession? [*To the others.*] I betrayed my city out of spite and malice; I deserve to be scorned by everyone. Spit in my face, and let there be no more of this. [*NASTI does not move.*] You—soldier—spit!

FRANZ [*gaily, to GOETZ*]. Shall I spit?

GOETZ [*equally gaily*]. Spit, my boy, and do a good job while you're at it!

FRANZ *spits at HEINRICH.*

HEINRICH. Now all is over. Heinrich is dead of shame. The priest remains. An anonymous priest; and it is before him that you must kneel. [*After a moment of waiting, he strikes NASTI suddenly.*] Murderer! I must be mad to humiliate myself before you when everything that happened was your fault!

NASTI. My fault!

HEINRICH. Yes! Yes! You are responsible. You wanted to be a prophet, and here you are defeated, a prisoner waiting for the hangman, and all those who trusted you are going to die. All! All of them! Ha! Ha! You pretended you knew how to love the poor, and I didn't know the way; well, you see; you have done them more harm than I have.

NASTI. More than you, you excrement! [*He throws himself on HEINRICH. They are dragged apart.*] Who betrayed the city? You or I?

HEINRICH. I did! I did! But I should never have done it if you hadn't murdered the Bishop.

NASTI. God commanded me to strike him because he was starving the poor.

HEINRICH. God, indeed? How simple it all is; then God commanded me to betray the poor because the poor wanted to murder the monks!

NASTI. God *cannot* command anyone to betray the poor—God is always on their side.

HEINRICH. If He is on their side, why do their revolts always fail? Why has He permitted your revolt to finish in despair today? Come along, answer me! Answer! Why don't you answer me? You cannot?

GOETZ. This is the moment. This is the agony. This is the sweat in drops of blood. There! There! Agony is refreshing. How gentle you look; I see your face, and I feel that twenty thousand men are about to die. I love you. [*He kisses NASTI on the mouth.*] Come now, brother, the last word has not been spoken; I decided I would take Worms, but if God is on your side, something may happen to prevent me.

NASTI [*in a low voice, with conviction*]. Something will happen.

HEINRICH [*crying out*]. Nothing. Nothing at all! Nothing will happen. It would be much too unjust. If God had to work a miracle, why should He not have done it before I became a traitor? Why should He damn me if He were going to save you?

An OFFICER enters. All are startled.

THE OFFICER. All is ready. The troops are drawn up at the edge of the ravine, behind the chariots.

GOETZ. So soon? [*Pause.*] Tell Captain Ulrich I am coming.

The OFFICER goes out. GOETZ sinks into a chair.

CATHERINE. There's your miracle, sweetheart. [*GOETZ passes his hand over his face.*] Go! Pillage and slaughter! And so, good night.

GOETZ [*with a weariness which changes into a simulated exaltation*]. This is the moment of farewell. When I return, I shall be covered with blood and my tent will be empty. Pity, I had grown accustomed to you. [*To NASTI and HEINRICH.*] You

will spend the night together, like a couple of lovers. [*To HEINRICH.*] Be sure and hold his hand tenderly while they are ripping his guts out. [*To FRANZ, pointing to NASTI.*] If he agrees to confess, stop the torture immediately; as soon as he has been absolved, string him up. [*As if suddenly remembering the existence of CATHERINE.*] Ah, the bride! Franz, you will assemble the stable boys, and introduce them to Madame. Let them do what they like, short of killing her.

CATHERINE [*suddenly throwing herself at his feet*]. Goetz! Pity! Pity! Not that! Not that horror! Pity!

GOETZ [*recoiling, astonished*]. You were so proud and confident just now . . . You didn't believe me?

CATHERINE. No, Goetz, I didn't believe you.

GOETZ. To tell you the truth, I didn't believe in it myself. You only believe in evil *afterwards*. [*She clings to his knees.*] Franz, take her away. [*FRANZ pulls her away and throws her on the bed.*] There we are. I have forgotten nothing . . . No! I really believe I have forgotten nothing. [*Pause.*] Still no miracle; I'm beginning to think God is giving me a free hand. Thank you, oh Lord, thank you very much. Thank you for the women violated, the children impaled, the men decapitated. [*Pause*] If only I wanted to talk! I know so much, you dirty hypocrite. Listen, Nasti, I'm going to give you the answer; *God is making use of me*. You saw how it was tonight; well, He sent His angels down to save me.

HEINRICH. His angels?

GOETZ. All of you. Catherine is very certainly an angel. So are you, so is the banker. [*Returning to NASTI.*] What about this key? Did I ask God to send me this key? I didn't even suspect its existence, but God had to send one of His ministers to place it in my hands. Naturally, you all know what He desires. That I should spare His priests and rescue His nuns. Therefore, He tempts me, very gently, making opportunities without compromising Himself. If I am caught, He has the right to disown me; after all, I could easily throw this key into the ravine.

NASTI. Yes, you could. You can still.

GOETZ. No, indeed, my angel. You know perfectly well that I cannot.

NASTI. Why not?

GOETZ. Because I cannot be other than myself. Listen, I am going to take a nice little blood bath to oblige the good Lord. But when it is all over, He will stop His nose and cry that that wasn't at all what He wanted. Do you really not want it, oh Lord? Then there is still time to prevent me. I don't ask for the heavens to fall on my head; a mere expectoration would suffice; let me slip in a man's slime, break my thigh, and that would be enough for one day. No? Fine, fine. I don't insist. Look, Nasti, look at this key; a key is a fine thing, a key is a useful thing. And look at these hands. There's workmanship. We should all praise the Lord for giving us hands. Then, if you hold a key in your hands, that cannot be wicked; let us praise the Lord for all the hands holding keys at this moment in all the countries of the world. But as for what the hand does with the key, the Lord declines responsibility, that doesn't concern Him at all, the poor fellow. Yes, Lord, You are completely innocent, how can You conceive nothingness, You who are fullness itself? Your presence is light, and changes all into light; how are You to know the half-light of my heart? And Your infinite understanding? How can it enter my reasons without bursting them asunder? Hatred and weakness, violence, death, displeasure, all that proceeds from man alone; it is my only empire, and I am alone within it; what happens within me is attributable to me alone. There—there—I take everything on myself, and I shall never utter one complaint. On the Day of Judgment, silence, shut lips; I am far too proud. I shall let myself be damned without uttering a word. But doesn't it embarrass You a little, Lord, a very little, to have to damn the man who does Your work for You? I am going, I am going, the men are waiting, the good little key is dragging me along—it wants to go home to its beloved keyhole. [*In the tent opening, he turns back.*] Do any of you know my equal? I am the man who makes the All-Powerful uneasy. Through me, God is disgusted by Himself. There are twenty thousand

nobles, thirty bishops, fifteen kings, we've had three emperors, a Pope, and an anti-Pope. But can you offer me another Goetz? Sometimes, I imagine Hell an empty desert waiting for me alone. Farewell. [*He turns to go. HEINRICH bursts out laughing.*] What's the matter?

HEINRICH. But Hell is a public convenience! [*GOETZ stops and looks at him. To the others.*] This is the strangest of all visionaries; a man who believes he alone is doing evil. Every night the soil of Germany is illuminated by living torches; tonight, as on every night, cities are going up in flames by dozens, and the captains who command the sackings don't make nearly so much fuss about it. They kill, on week days, and then on Sundays, go to confession, humbly. But this man takes himself for the Devil incarnate, because he is carrying out his duties as a soldier. [*To GOETZ.*] If you are the Devil, jester, who am I, I who pretended to love the poor, and delivered them up to the mercy of your soldiers?

GOETZ *stares at HEINRICH, almost fascinated, during this speech. When it is over, he shakes himself.*

GOETZ. What are you demanding? The right to be damned as well? I grant it you. Hell is wide enough for me not to meet you there.

HEINRICH. And the others?

GOETZ. What others?

HEINRICH. All the others. All those who haven't the luck to kill, but desire it with their whole hearts.

GOETZ. My wickedness is not their wickedness; they do Evil as a luxury, or out of interest; I do Evil for Evil's sake.

HEINRICH. What do reasons matter if it is proved that a man can *only* do Evil?

GOETZ. Has it been proved?

HEINRICH. Yes, jester, it has been proved.

GOETZ. By whom?

HEINRICH. By God Himself. God has made it impossible for man to do good on this earth.

GOETZ. Impossible?

HEINRICH. Completely impossible. Love is impossible! Justice

is impossible! Why don't you try and love your neighbour?
You can tell me afterwards what success you have.

GOETZ. Why shouldn't I love my neighbour if I should so decide?

HEINRICH. Because if only one man should hate another, it would be sufficient for hatred to spread from one to another and overwhelm mankind.

GOETZ [*continuing*]. This man here loves the poor.

HEINRICH. Yet he lied to them most cunningly, he excited their lowest passions and encouraged them to murder an old man. [*Pause.*] What could I do? Tell me what could I have done? I was innocent, and yet the crime fell upon my shoulders, like a thief attacking in the night. Where was the Good then, eh? Where was the least Evil? [*Pause.*] You are taking a great deal of trouble for nothing, you vaunter of the ways of vice! If you want to deserve Hell, you need only remain in bed. The world itself is iniquity; if you accept the world, you are equally iniquitous. If you should try and change it, then you become an executioner. [*He laughs.*] The stench of the world puts out the stars.

GOETZ. Then all are damned?

HEINRICH. Ah no, not all! [*Pause.*] I have my faith, oh God, I have my faith. I shall not fall into the sin of despair. I am infected to the very marrow, but I know Thou wilt deliver me if Thou hast so decided. [*To GOETZ.*] We are all equally guilty, bastard, we are all equally deserving of hell-fire, but the Lord forgives us when it pleases Him to forgive.

GOETZ. He will never forgive me against my will.

HEINRICH. Miserable wretch, how can you struggle against His mercy? How can you exhaust His infinite patience? He will take you up between His fingers if He pleases, raise you to the level of His paradise; with the tip of His finger He will make you overflow with His goodwill, and you will find yourself becoming good despite yourself. Go! Burn Worms. Go to pillage, go to massacre—you're wasting your time; one of these days you'll wake up in Purgatory like everyone else.

GOETZ. Then everyone is doing Evil?

HEINRICH. Everyone.

GOETZ. And no one in the world has ever done only Good?

HEINRICH. No one.

GOETZ. Perfect. [*He re-enters the tent.*] I will make a wager with you that I shall.

HEINRICH. Shall what?

GOETZ. Live righteously. Will you take the bet?

HEINRICH [*shrugging his shoulders*]. No, bastard, I will wager nothing at all.

GOETZ. You are wrong; you tell me Good is impossible—therefore I wager I will live righteously; it is obviously the best way to live alone. I was a criminal—I will reform. I turn my coat, and become a saint.

HEINRICH. Who will be the judge?

GOETZ. You yourself. In a year and a day from now. You have only to make your bet.

HEINRICH. You fool, if you wager on such a thing you have lost your bet in advance. You will be righteous merely to win a bet.

GOETZ. Very well. Here are the dice. If I win, Evil triumphs. If I lose—ah! If I lose, I am not in the smallest doubt as to what I shall do. Well? Who plays against me? Nasti?

NASTI. No.

GOETZ. Why not?

NASTI. It is wrong.

GOETZ. Of course it is wrong. What else did you expect? Come along, baker, I am still wicked for the moment.

NASTI. If you want to live righteously, you need only make up your mind. That is all.

GOETZ. I want to drive the Lord into a corner. This time it is yes, or no. If He lets me win, the city burns, and His responsibility is established. Come now, play; if God is with you, you must never fear. You dare not, coward? You prefer to be hanged? Who will dare?

CATHERINE. I will.

GOETZ. You, Catherine? [*He looks at her.*] Why not? [*He hands her the dice.*] Throw.

CATHERINE [*throwing the dice*]. A two and a one. [*She shudders.*] You'll find it very difficult to lose.

GOETZ. Who said I want to lose? [*He puts the dice back in the box.*] Lord—this time You're caught. The moment has come to show Your hand. [*He throws the dice.*]

CATHERINE. One and one . . . You've lost!

GOETZ. I submit to the will of God. Farewell, Catherine.

CATHERINE. Kiss me. [*They kiss.*] Farewell, Goetz.

GOETZ. Take this purse, and go where you please. [*To FRANZ.*]

Franz, take word to Captain Ulrich to send the men to rest.

Nasti—you will return to the city, there is still time to prevent a panic. If you open the gates at dawn, if the priests leave Worms safe and sound, and place themselves under my protection, I will lift the siege at noon. Agreed?

NASTI. Agreed.

GOETZ. Have you recovered your faith, prophet?

NASTI. I never lost it.

GOETZ. Fortunate man!

HEINRICH. You can restore their liberty, you can give them back their life and hope. But me, you dog, me who you forced into betrayal, can you ever restore my purity?

GOETZ. It's up to you to find it again. After all, there was no real harm done.

HEINRICH. What matters whether the harm was done? It is my intention that matters. I'll follow you, yes, I'll follow, step by step, night and day; you can rely on me to judge your actions. You can rest happy, in a year and a day, wherever you may be, I shall meet you at the time and place appointed.

GOETZ. Here is the dawn. How cold it is. The dawn and absolute Good have entered my tent, and none of us is and happier; this woman weeps, that man hates me bitterly; it feels like the aftermath of disaster. Perhaps Good is a disaster . . . At all events, it doesn't concern me now. I don't have to judge it, but to do it. Farewell.

He goes out. CATHERINE *begins to laugh.*

CATHERINE [*laughing till the tears roll down her cheeks*]. He let me beat him! I saw! I saw! He let me beat him—but he had to cheat first!

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE IV

The Castle of Heidenstamm.

FIRST PEASANT. Shouting their heads off, in there.

KARL. It's the barons; they're mad with rage.

FIRST PEASANT. Supposing he loses his nerve and gives in?

KARL. Don't worry; he's as stubborn as a mule. Careful—hide.
He's coming.

GOETZ [*to KARL*]. Dear brother, will you bring us some wine?
Three cups will suffice—I shall not drink myself. Do this for
the love of me, brother.

KARL. For the love of you, brother, I will.

GOETZ *goes out. The peasants come out of hiding, laughing and
slapping their thighs.*

THE PEASANTS. Brother—little brother! Baby brother! Take
that! Take that for the love of me!

They buffet each other joyously, laughing all the while.

KARL [*arranging glasses on a tray*]. All the servants are his
brothers. He says he loves us, he coaxes us, and kisses us too,
sometimes. Yesterday he decided to wash my feet. The kind
lord, the good brother. Pah! [*He spits.*] That word burns my
lips, and I spit every time I have to say it. He'll be hanged
because he called me brother, and when they put the rope
round his neck, I'll kiss him on the lips and say: 'Good
night, little brother. Die now for the love of me.' [*He goes
out, carrying the tray with the glasses.*]

FIRST PEASANT. There goes a real man. No one ever gets round
him.

SECOND PEASANT. They say he knows how to read, too.

FIRST PEASANT. Holy Virgin!

KARL [*returning*]. These are your orders. Visit everyone on the

estates of Nossak and Schulheim. Spread the news in the smallest hamlet: 'Goetz is giving the peasants the lands of Heidenstamm.' Give them time to digest that, and then say: 'If that bastard, that son-of-a-bitch has given his lands away, why doesn't the high and mighty lord of Schulheim not give you his?' Work them all up, work them up into a rage, spread trouble everywhere. Go. [*They go out.*] Goetz, my darling brother, you'll see how I'll spoil your good works. Give away your lands, give them all away: one day you'll be sorry you didn't fall dead before you gave them away. [*He laughs.*] For love of you! Every day I dress you, and undress you. I see your navel, your toes, your behind, and you expect me to love you. I'll give you love. Conrad was hard and brutal, but his insults offended me less than your kindnesses. [*Enter NASTI.*] What do you want?

NASTI. Goetz sent for me.

KARL. Nasti!

NASTI [*recognizing him*]. It's you!

KARL. So you know Goetz? Charming friendship.

NASTI. Don't worry about that. [*Pause.*] I know what you're planning, Karl! You'd do much better to lay low and wait quietly for my orders.

KARL. The country takes no orders from the town.

NASTI. If you try and pull this dirty trick, I'll have you hanged.

KARL. Take care the one hanged doesn't turn out to be you.

To begin with, what are you doing here? It's very odd.

You've come to talk to Goetz, and you tell us not to revolt!

Who's to say you haven't been bribed!

NASTI. Who's to say you haven't been bribed to make the revolt break out prematurely, and so have it crushed the more easily?

KARL. Here comes Goetz.

GOETZ *enters, backing away from the barons SCHULHEIM, NOSSAK and REITSCHEL, who are pressing around him, shouting.*

NOSSAK. You don't give a damn for the peasants: what you want is our necks.

SCHULHEIM. You're hoping to use our blood to wipe away the bitches of your mother.

NOSSAK. You're digging the graves of all the German nobility.
GOETZ. My brothers, my very dear brothers, I don't even know what you are talking about.

RIETSCHEL. You don't know that this gesture of yours will put the match to the powder? That our peasants will be mad with rage if we don't immediately give them our lands, our possessions, down to our very shirts, and then our blessing on top of everything?

SCHULHEIM. I suppose you don't know they'll come and besiege us in our homes?

RIETSCHEL. That if we accept it means our ruin, and if we refuse it means our death?

NOSSAK. You don't know any of that?

GOETZ. My very dear brothers . . .

SCHULHEIM. No speeches! Will you renounce your plans? Answer yes or no.

GOETZ. My very dear brothers, forgive me: I say no.

SCHULHEIM. You're an assassin!

GOETZ. Yes, my brother, like everyone.

SCHULHEIM. A bastard!

GOETZ. Yes; like Jesus Christ.

SCHULHEIM. You sack of excrement! You encumberer of the earth! [*He drives his fist into GOETZ's face. GOETZ staggers, then recovers, and advances on SCHULHEIM. They all shrink away. Suddenly, he flings himself full length on the ground.*]

GOETZ. Help, angels, help! Help me to overcome myself! [*He trembles all over.*] I won't strike him. I'll cut off my right hand if it wants to strike him. [*He writhes about on the ground. SCHULHEIM kicks him.*] Roses, rain of roses, gentle caresses. How God loves me. I accept everything. [*He rises.*] I'm a dog of a bastard, a receptacle of filth, a traitor, pray for me.

SCHULHEIM [*striking him*]. Will you give up your plan?

GOETZ. Don't strike me. You will soil yourself.

RIETSCHEL [*threateningly*]. Will you give it up?

GOETZ. Oh Lord, deliver me from the abominable desire to laugh! .

SCHULHEIM. Good God!

RIETSCHEL. Come away. We're wasting our time.

The barons go out, and GOETZ becomes aware of the two men.

GOETZ [*joyfully*]. Hail, Nasti! All hail, my brother. I am happy to see you again. Two months ago, in front of Worms, you offered me an alliance with the people. Today I can accept. Wait: I must speak. I have good news for you. Before doing Good, I told myself I had to know what it was, and I considered for a long time. Well, Nasti, now I know what Good must be. It is love, of course: but the fact is that men don't love one another, and what is it that prevents them? Inequality of conditions, servitude and misery. Therefore, these things must be suppressed. Up till now, we are in agreement, are we not? Nothing surprising about that; I have profited by your lessons. Yes, Nasti, I have thought of you a great deal, these last weeks. Only, you want to postpone the kingdom of God: I am much more cunning; I have found a way to establish it now, at least in a single corner of the world—here. Firstly; I give up my lands to the peasants. Secondly: on this very land, I shall organize the first truly Christian community: all equal! Ah, Nasti, I am a captain: I engage the battle of Good and I think I shall be able to win it at once, and without shedding blood. Will you help me? You know how to speak to the poor. We two will be able to construct a Paradise, for the Lord Himself has chosen me to efface our original sin. Listen, I have found a name for my Utopia: I shall call it the City of the Sun. What's the matter? You're as stubborn as a mule! Ah, you kill-joy! What else have you found to reproach me with?

NASTI. Keep your lands for yourself.

GOETZ. Keep my lands! And it's you, Nasti, who is asking this?

I expected everything, excepting that.

NASTI. Keep them. If you want to help us, don't do anything, and above all, don't interfere.

GOETZ. Then you, too, believe that the peasants will revolt?

NASTI. I don't believe it, I know.

GOETZ. I might have known this would happen. I should have foreseen that I should outrage your narrow, prejudiced soul.

Those swine just now, and you, at this moment—I must be

very right, or you wouldn't all be protesting so loudly. You are only encouraging me! I'll give them all away, these lands of mine. How happy I shall be to give them away! Good shall be done in spite of you all.

NASTI. Who asked you to give them away?

GOETZ. I know I have to give them away.

NASTI. But who asked you?

GOETZ. I know, I tell you. I see my way as clearly as I see you.

The Lord has visited His light upon me.

NASTI. When God is silent, you can make Him say whatever you please.

GOETZ. Ah! Admirable prophet! Thirty thousand peasants are dying of hunger, I ruin myself to relieve their misery, and you can only tell me God forbids that I should save them.

NASTI. You—save the poor? You can only corrupt them.

GOETZ. Then who will save them?

NASTI. Don't concern yourself with the poor: they will save themselves.

GOETZ. Then what will become of me, if you take away my means of doing Good?

NASTI. You have plenty to do. Administer your fortune, and watch it grow. That's a task to fill a lifetime.

GOETZ. Then to please you I have to become a wicked rich man?

NASTI. No rich man is wicked. He is rich. That is all.

GOETZ. Nasti, I am one of you.

NASTI. No.

GOETZ. Have I not been poor all my life?

NASTI. There are two kinds of poor—those who are poor in company and those who are poor alone. The first are the real poor, the others are only the rich who've been unlucky.

GOETZ. And the rich who have given away their possessions—they aren't poor either, I suppose.

NASTI. No, they are merely no longer rich.

GOETZ. Then I was beaten in advance. Shame on you, Nasti, you condemn a Christian soul without appeal. [*He walks up and down in agitation.*] However proud those petty lords may be who hate me, you are even prouder, and I should find it less difficult to join their caste than to join yours. Patience!

Thanks to Thee, oh Lord, I shall love them without return.
My love will break down the walls of your intractable soul:
it will disarm the peevishness of the poor. I love you, Nasti,
I love you all.

NASTI [*more gently*]. If you love us, give up your plan.

GOETZ. No.

NASTI [*in a changed voice, more urgently*]. Listen. I must have
seven years.

GOETZ. To do what?

NASTI. In seven years we shall be ready to begin the holy war.
Not before. If you plunge the peasants into this brawl today,
I don't give them more than a week. What you will have
destroyed in eight days, will need more than half a century
to reconstruct.

KARL. My lord, the peasants are here.

NASTI. Send them away, Goetz. [GOETZ *is silent*.] Listen, if
you really wish to help us, there is a way.

GOETZ [*to KARL*]. Ask them to wait, my brother. [KARL *goes out*.] What do you propose?

NASTI. Keep your lands.

GOETZ. That depends.

NASTI. If you keep them, they can serve as a place of refuge,
and a place of assembly. I shall establish myself in one of
your villages. From here, my orders will radiate over Ger-
many; from here, in seven years, will go out the signal for
war. You can render us inestimable service. Well?

GOETZ. The answer is no.

NASTI. You refuse?

GOETZ. I cannot do Good in instalments. Haven't you under-
stood, Nasti? Thanks to me, before the year is out, happiness,
love and virtue will reign over ten thousand acres of this
land. On my domains I wish to build the City of the Sun,
and you want me to turn it into a hiding-place for murderers.

NASTI. Good has to be served like a soldier, Goetz, and what
soldier can win a war by himself alone? Begin by being
modest.

GOETZ. I will not be modest. As humble as you please, but
never modest. Modesty is the virtue of the half-hearted.

[Pause.] Why should I help you prepare your war? God has forbidden us to shed blood, and you want to make Germany a holocaust? I will not be your accomplice.

NASTI. You refuse to shed blood? Then, give away your lands, give away your castle, and you'll see if this land of ours does not begin to bleed.

GOETZ. Germany will not bleed. Good cannot engender Evil.

NASTI. Good does not engender Evil, true; therefore, because your mad generosity provokes a massacre, what you are doing cannot be Good.

GOETZ. Can it be Good to perpetuate the sufferings of the poor?

NASTI. I ask for seven years.

GOETZ. And for those who die before then? Those who have spent their lives in hatred and fear will die in despair.

NASTI. God will receive their souls.

GOETZ. Seven years! And then in seven years will come seven years of war, and then seven years of repentance because we shall have to build up our ruins again. Who knows what will follow after: a new war, perhaps, and a new repentance, and new prophets who will ask for seven more years of patience. Charlatan! Will you make them wait till the Day of Judgment? I tell you Good is possible, every day, at every hour, at this very moment. I shall be the man who lives by Good alone. Heinrich told me: 'It would be enough for two men to hate each other for hatred, from one to another, to spread throughout the world.' And I tell you, it suffices for one man to love all men with undivided love for that love to spread from one to another throughout humanity.

NASTI. And you will be that man?

GOETZ. Yes, with God's help, I will be that man. I know that Good is much more difficult than Evil. Evil was only myself, but Good is the whole world. I am not afraid. We must bring new warmth to the world, and I will be that warmth. God has commanded me to shine, and I will shine. I will bleed light. I am a burning coal, the breath of God enflames me, and I am consuming alive. Nasti, I am infected with Good, and my malady must prove contagious. I shall be witness, martyr and temptation.

NASTI. Impostor!

GOETZ. You shall not shake my resolution! I see, I know, the way is clear. I shall prophesy!

NASTI. False prophet—instrument of the Devil! You are he who says: I shall do what I think right, though the world perish.

GOETZ. The false prophet and the instrument of the Devil is he who says: Let the world perish, and I will then see if Good is possible.

NASTI. Goetz, if you stand in my way, I will destroy you.

GOETZ. Could you kill me, Nasti?

NASTI. Yes, if you stand in my way.

GOETZ. I could not kill you. Love is now my lot. I am going to give away my lands.

CURTAIN

SCENE V

Before the portal of a village church. Two benches are under the porch. On one of them is a drum, on the other, a flute. GOETZ enters, disguised as a monk, followed by NASTI.

GOETZ [*calling*]. Hola! Ho! Not a soul within thirty leagues: they've all gone to ground. My bounty has descended upon them like a disaster. The fools! [*He rounds on NASTI.*] Why are you following me?

NASTI. To be present at your failure.

GOETZ. There will be no failure. Today I lay the first stone of my city. They are in the cellars, I suppose. But patience. Let me only capture half-a-dozen, and you'll see if I don't know how to win them over. [*Cries, music of fifes.*] What is this? [*Enter a procession of PEASANTS, half drunk, carrying a plaster saint shoulder high on a litter.*] You seem very gay. Are you celebrating the gracious gift of your former lord?

A PEASANT. God forbid, holy father.

GOETZ. I am no monk. [*He throws back his hood.*]

THE PEASANTS. Goetz! [*They recoil, frightened. Some of them cross themselves.*]

GOETZ. Goetz, yes, Goetz, the boggy, Goetz the bugbear! Goetz the Attila who gave away his lands for Christian charity. Do I seem so redoubtable? Come, I wish to speak to you. [*Pause.*] Well? What are you waiting for? Come here! [*Silence from the peasants. In a more imperious tone.*] Who's in command?

AN OLD MAN [*unwillingly*]. I am.

GOETZ. Come here. [*The OLD MAN moves out from the group and goes to him. The PEASANTS watch them in silence.*]

GOETZ. Tell me, I saw sacks of grain in the castle barns. Haven't you understood? No more taxes, no more tithes.

THE OLD MAN. For a little while longer, we leave everything as it should be.

GOETZ. Why?

THE OLD MAN. To see what happens.

GOETZ. Very well. The grain will rot. [*Pause.*] What do you think of your new estates?

THE OLD MAN. Don't let us discuss it, my lord.

GOETZ. I am no longer your lord. Call me brother. Understand?

THE OLD MAN. Yes, my lord.

GOETZ. Your brother, I tell you.

THE OLD MAN. Oh no. Not that, no.

GOETZ. I ord . . . I beg you.

THE OLD MAN. You can be my brother as much as you like, but I shall never be yours. Each one to his station, my lord.

GOETZ. Never mind! You'll grow used to it. [*Pointing to the flute and the drum.*] What are those?

THE OLD MAN. A flute and a drum.

GOETZ. Who plays them?

THE OLD MAN. Monks.

GOETZ. There are monks here?

THE OLD MAN. Brother Tetzl has arrived from Worms with two minor friars. They have to come to sell indulgences.

GOETZ [*bitterly*]. So that is why you seem so gay? [*Abruptly.*]

The devil! I won't have such mummary here. [*Silence.*]

Those indulgences are worthless. Do you believe God gerrymanders His forgiveness? [*Pause.*] If I were still your master and commanded you to drive these three scoundrels away, would you do it?

THE OLD MAN. Yes, I would.

GOETZ. Well, for the last time, it is your master who commands you . . .

THE OLD MAN. You aren't our master any more.

GOETZ. Go away: you are too old. [*He pushes the OLD MAN away, leaps up on to a step, and addresses the crowd.*] Have you even wondered why I made you a gift of all my lands? [*Pointing to a peasant.*] Answer me.

THE PEASANT. Don't know.

GOETZ [*to a woman*]. Do you?

THE WOMAN [*hesitating*]. Maybe . . . maybe because you wanted to make us happy.

GOETZ. Well answered! Yes, that was what I wanted. But you see, happiness is only a means to an end. What do you expect to do with your happiness?

THE WOMAN [*frightened*]. With happiness? First, we've got to have it.

GOETZ. You will be happy, never fear. What will you do with it?

THE WOMAN. Never thought about it. Don't even know what it is.

GOETZ. I have thought about it for you. [*Pause.*] You know that God commands us to love one another. Only, you see, up till now it was impossible. Even yesterday, my brothers, you were much too unhappy for anyone to dream of asking you for love. Well, I wanted you all to be without excuse. I am going to make you big and fat, and you will love your neighbours; by heaven, I insist that you love everyone. I give up the command of your bodies, but I have come to guide your souls, for God has visited His light upon me. I am the architect, and you will be my workmen; all for all, the tools and the lands in common. No more poor men, no more rich men, no more laws except the law of love. We shall be an example to all Germany. What do you say, lads, shall we give it a trial? [*Silence.*] I am not displeased to see you frightened in the beginning; nothing is more reassuring than a good old devil. But the angels, my brothers! It's the angels who are suspect. [*The crowd smiles, sighs and begins to stir.*] At last! At last you are smiling at me!

THE CROWD. Here they are! Here they are!

GOETZ [*turns round, sees TETZEL, and says bitterly*]. The Devil fly away with the monks!

The two minor friars pick up their instruments. A table is brought and set down on the top step. TETZEL lays his rolls of parchment on the table.

TETZEL. Well, now, little fathers! Come along! Nearer! Nearer! I've not been eating garlic! [*They all laugh*]. How's things in these parts? Is the land good?

THE PEASANTS. Not too bad.

TETZEL. And the wives? Just as unbearable?

THE PEASANTS. You know how it is. Like everywhere else.

TETZEL. You mustn't complain; they protect you against the Devil because they are bigger bitches than he is. [*The crowd laughs.*] Ah, my little friends, that's not what we're here for; we're going to talk about serious things! Music! [*Drum and fife.*] Work all the time, is all very fine and large, but sometimes, a man leans on his hoe, looks away into the distance, and says to himself: 'What's going to happen to me after I die?' It's not enough to have a nice little grave, with plenty of flowers: a man's soul doesn't live in the tomb. Then where will the soul go? Down to hell? [*Drum.*] Or up to Heaven? [*Flute.*] Good people, you can be quite sure the good Lord has asked Himself that question. He is so worried about you, the good Lord, that He doesn't even sleep any more. You, over there, what's your name?

THE PEASANT. Peter.

TETZEL. Tell me, Peter, I expect you take a drop too much from time to time? Come along, don't lie to me!

THE PEASANT. It does happen.

TETZEL. And the wife? You beat her sometimes?

THE PEASANT. When I've been drinking.

TETZEL. And yet you fear God?

THE PEASANT. Oh yes, father!

TETZEL. And the Holy Virgin? Do you love her well?

THE PEASANT. More than my own mother.

TETZEL. Then see how embarrassed the good Lord is. "That good man is not very wicked, He says to Himself. And I don't want to hurt him very much. Nevertheless, he has sinned, and I must punish him."

THE PEASANT [*desolate*]. Alas!

TETZEL. But wait a moment. Luckily, there are the Saints! Each one of them has deserved Paradise a hundred thousand times, but what good is that since they can only enter once, each one of them? Then what does the good Lord say to Himself? He says: 'Those hundred thousand entrances that haven't been used, we mustn't waste them, and I'm going to distribute them to those who haven't deserved them. That good Peter, if he buys an indulgence from Brother Tetzal, will enter into Paradise with one of the invitation cards

signed by good St. Martin.' Well? Well? Wasn't that a good idea? [*Acclamations.*] Come along, Peter, bring out your purse. My brothers, God is offering him an incredible bargain. Paradise for only half a ducat. Where is the curmudgeon, where is the miser who won't give half a ducat for his eternal life? [*He takes a coin from PETER.*] Thank you. Go home, and sin no more. Who buys? Look, here is a special bargain. When you give this little note to your own priest, he has to grant you absolution from any mortal sin of your own choosing. Isn't that true, father?

THE PARISH PRIEST. Quite true.

TETZEL. D'you see this? [*He brandishes a parchment.*] Ah, this, my brothers, is a special dainty from the good Lord! These indulgences have all been specially drawn up for people who have members of their family still in Purgatory. If you lay out the necessary, all your late relations will spread their wings and fly to Heaven. The price is two crowns per person transferred: the transfer is immediate. Who buys? Who buys? You there—who have you lost?

THE PEASANT. My mother.

TETZEL. Your mother? Is that all? At your age, have you only lost your mother?

THE PEASANT [*hesitating*]. Well, I did have an uncle . . .

TETZEL. And you'd leave your poor uncle in Purgatory? Come along, come along! Count out four crowns. [*He takes them, and holds them out above the alms-box.*] Attention, good people, attention, When the coins fall, the souls will fly away. [*He drops the coins into the box. Flourish from the flute.*] One! [*Another flourish on the flute.*] And two! There they go! There they go! They are flying over your heads: two lovely pure white butterflies! [*Flute.*] We'll meet you in heaven! We'll meet you in heaven! Please pray for us and give our respects to the Saints. Come on, friends, a good hand for the little darlings. [*Applause.*] Who's next? [*The peasants surge round him.*] For your wife and your grandmother? For your sister? [*Flute . . . flute.*] Pay up! Pay up!

GOETZ. Stand back! [*Murmurs from the crowd.*]

TETZEL [*to the PARISH PRIEST*]. Who's that?

THE PRIEST. Their former lord. Nothing to fear.

GOETZ. Fools, who believe yourselves quit with a miserable donation, do you think the martyrs allowed themselves to be burnt alive so that you could walk into Paradise as if it were a windmill? As for the Saints, you won't save your souls by purchasing their merits, but in working to acquire their virtues!

A PEASANT. Then I'd rather hang myself and be damned outright. A man can't become a saint when he has to work sixteen hours a day.

TETZEL [*to the PEASANT*]. Hold your tongue, you fat fool! No one's asking you to be a saint. Buy a little indulgence from time to time, and God will make room for you through His infinite mercy.

GOETZ. Go ahead! Lay o'ut your money on his trumpery rubbish. He'll make you spend a ducat or two for the right to return to your miserable vices, but God won't ratify the transaction! You're rushing headlong down to Hell.

TETZEL. Take away their hope! Take away their faith! Their courage! What will you put in their place?

GOETZ. Love.

TETZEL. What do you know of love?

GOETZ. What do you know of love yourself? How could you love these men, you who despise them enough to try and sell them Paradise?

TETZEL [*to the PEASANTS*]. I, my lambs, do I despise you?

ALL. Oh!

TETZEL. I, my little chickens, do I not love you?

THE PEASANTS. Yes, yes! Of course you love us!

TETZEL. I am the Church, my brothers: and outside the Church, there is no love. Holy Church is our universal mother: through her monks and her priests, she dispenses the same maternal love to all her sons, to the most unfortunate, as to the most pampered favourites of life. [*A hand-bell rings, and a fattle sounds. The LEPER appears. The PEASANTS huddle away at the far end of the scene, terror-stricken.*] Who's this?

The PARISH PRIEST and the minor friars rush into the church.

THE PEASANTS [*pointing to the LEPER*]. There! There! Take care!
The leper!

TETZEL [*horrified*]. Sweet Jesus!

A pause. GOETZ goes up to the LEPER.

GOETZ [*to TETZEL, pointing to the LEPER.*] Embrace him!

TETZEL. Pah!

GOETZ. If the Church loves without revulsion or recoil the most despicable of her sons, why do you hesitate to embrace him?
[*TETZEL shakes his head.*] Jesus would have taken him in his arms. I love him better than you. [*Pause. He goes to the LEPER.*]

THE LEPER [*between his teeth*]. Here comes another to pull the trick of the leper's kiss.

GOETZ. Come here, my brother.

THE LEPER. I thought so! [*He goes to GOETZ unwillingly.*] If it's a question of your salvation, I cannot refuse, but do it quickly. You're all the same; you'd think the Lord had given me leprosy expressly to give you a chance to earn your place in Heaven. [*As GOETZ approaches him.*] Not on the mouth! [*GOETZ kisses him on the mouth.*] Pah! [*He wipes his lips.*]

TETZEL [*beginning to laugh*]. Well? Are you satisfied? Look at him wiping his lips. Is he less of a leper now than he was before you kissed him? Tell me, leper, how goes the world with you?

THE LEPER. It would be better if there were fewer sound men and far more lepers.

TETZEL. Where do you live?

THE LEPER. With other lepers in the forest.

TETZEL. What do you do all day?

THE LEPER. Tell each other leper stories.

TETZEL. Why have you come down to the village?

THE LEPER. I came to see if I could pick up an indulgence.

TETZEL. Wonderful!

THE LEPER. Is it true that you can sell them?

TETZEL. For half a ducat.

THE LEPER. I haven't a penny.

TETZEL [*triumphantly, to the peasants*]. Watch this carefully!

[*To the LEPER.*] Do you see this shiny new indulgence? Which would you rather? That I should give it to you, or that I should kiss your lips?

THE LEPER. Well . . .

TETZEL. Oh, I will do whichever you like. Choose.

THE LEPER. Well, I'd rather you gave me the paper.

TETZEL. Here it is, gratis pro Deo—it's a gift from your Holy Mother Church. Take it.

THE LEPER. Hurrah for the Church! [TETZEL *throws him the parchment. The LEPER catches it.*]

TETZEL. Now, go home quickiy.

The LEPER goes. Sound of the bell, and the rattle.

TETZEL. Well? Which of us two loves him the better?

THE CROWD. You do! You do! Hurrah for Tetzal!

TETZEL. Come along, my brothers! Who's next? For your sister who died in a foreign land? [*Flute.*] For your aunts who brought you up? For your mother? For your father and your mother—for your eldest son! Pay up! Pay! Pay!

GOETZ. Dogs! [*He strikes the table, sweeping the drum off the top, and it rolls away to the foot of the steps.*] Christ drove the money-changers out of the Temple . . . [*He stops, looking at the silent and hostile peasants, pulls the hood down over his face and throws himself on his knees against the wall of the church, groaning.*] Ah! Ah! Ah! Shame on me! Shame on me! I don't know how to speak to them. Lord, I implore Thee, show me the way to their hearts!

The peasants watch him; TETZEL smiles; the peasants look at TETZEL. TETZEL winks, lays his finger on his lips to impose silence, and jerks his head in the direction of the church door. He tiptoes into the church. The peasants enter the church, carrying the plaster saint. They all disappear. A moment of silence, then HEINRICH appears in the doorway in lay clothes.

HEINRICH [*making his way towards GOETZ.*] You seem to think souls are like vegetables.

GOETZ. Who is that?

HEINRICH. The gardener can decide what is best for his carrots, but no one can direct the salvation of others.

GOETZ. Who is that speaking? Heinrich?

HEINRICH. Yes.

GOETZ [*rising and throwing back his hood*]. I was sure I should see you again after my first mistake. [*Pause.*] What have you come to do? Nourish your hatred?

HEINRICH. 'Whoever sows Good shall reap only Good.' You said that, didn't you?

GOETZ. Yes, I did say it, and I will say it again. [*Pause.*]

HEINRICH. I come to bring you the harvest.

GOETZ. It is too soon to reap. [*Pause.*]

HEINRICH. Catherine is dying: there is your first crop.

GOETZ. She is dying? God receive her soul. What do you want me to do? [HEINRICH *laughs*.] Don't laugh, imbecile! You can see that you don't know how to laugh.

HEINRICH [*excusing himself*]. He's pulling faces at me.

GOETZ [*turning round swiftly*]. Who? [*He understands.*] Ah! [*Turning back to HEINRICH.*] I see—so now he is with you always.

HEINRICH. Yes, always.

GOETZ. He must be company for you.

HEINRICH [*passing his hand over his face*]. He makes me tired.

GOETZ [*going to HEINRICH*]. Heinrich . . . If I have hurt you, forgive me.

HEINRICH. Forgive you? So that you can boast everywhere that you have changed hatred into love as Christ changed the water into wine.

GOETZ. Your hatred belongs to me. I will deliver you from your hatred and from the Devil!

HEINRICH [*in a changed voice, as if someone else were speaking through his mouth*]. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. I am the Father, the Devil is my son: hatred is the Holy Ghost. You could more easily divide the Holy Trinity than split our Trinity into three parts.

GOETZ. Then good night. Go back and say your masses in Worms. We shall meet again in nine months.

HEINRICH. I shall never go back to Worms, and I will never again say a mass. I no longer belong to the Church, jester. I have been forbidden to celebrate the offices and administer the holy sacraments.

GOETZ. What do they reproach you with?

HEINRICH. Taking money to betray the city.

GOETZ. It's a monstrous lie.

HEINRICH. I told the lie myself, I stood up in the pulpit and confessed everything before them all: my love of money, my jealousy, my disobedience, and my carnal desires.

GOETZ. You were lying!

HEINRICH. Why not? Everywhere in Worms they were saying that the Church abominated the poor, and the Church had ordered me to deliver the poor to the sword. We had to find a pretext for the Church to disown me.

GOETZ. You have expiated your sin.

HEINRICH. You know that no one ever expiates a sin.

GOETZ. You are right. Nothing can efface nothing. [*Pause. Suddenly he goes to HEINRICH.*] What is happening to Catherine?

HEINRICH. Her body is covered with sores—her blood is rotting away. For three weeks she has neither eaten nor slept.

GOETZ. Why did you not stay with her?

HEINRICH. She is no concern of mine, nor I of hers.

NASTI *enters and remains in the background.*

GOETZ. She must be nursed.

HEINRICH. She cannot be cured. She will certainly die.

GOETZ. What is she dying of?

HEINRICH. Of shame. Her body revolts her because of all the men's hands that have been laid upon it. Her heart disgusts her even more because your image has remained within it. Her mortal sickness is you.

GOETZ. All that happened last year, priest, and I no longer recognize the sins of a year ago. I will pay for this sin in the next world and for all Eternity. But in this world, it is over. I have no time to waste.

HEINRICH. Then there are two men named Goetz.

GOETZ. Two, yes. A living Goetz who lives by Good, and a dead Goetz who lived by Evil.

HEINRICH. And you buried your sins with the dead Goetz?

GOETZ. Yes.

HEINRICH. Excellent. Only it isn't a dead man who is killing

Catherine, but the fine, brave Goetz himself, the one who is devoting himself to living by love.

GOETZ. You're lying! It was the evil-doing Goetz who committed the crime.

HEINRICH. No crime has been committed. When you deflowered her you gave her far more than you possessed yourself: you gave her love. She really loved you, though I don't know why. And then, one fine day, divine grace touched you, so you pressed a purse in Catherine's hands, and drove her away. She is dying for your sake.

GOETZ. Could I have gone on living with a whore?

HEINRICH. Yes, because you made her what she is.

GOETZ. I had to renounce Good or give her up.

HEINRICH. If you had kept her, you might have saved her, and yourself with her. But save one soul—save only one? How could a man like Goetz stoop so low? He had much more important projects.

GOETZ [*abruptly*]. Where is she?

HEINRICH. On your own lands.

GOETZ. She wanted to see me again?

HEINRICH. Yes. And then Evil struck her down.

GOETZ. Where is she?

HEINRICH. I will not tell you: you have done her harm enough.

GOETZ [*raising his fist, furious*]. I . . . [*He controls himself.*] Very well, I will find her again myself. Farewell, Heinrich. [*He bows in the direction of the Devil.*] My respects. [*He turns back towards NASTI.*] Nasti, come with me. [*He goes.*]

HEINRICH [*amazed*]. Nasti!

NASTI *tries to follow* GOETZ. HEINRICH *stands in his way*.

HEINRICH [*timidly*]. NASTI! [*More loudly.*] Nasti, I was looking for you. Stop! I must talk to you. Despise me as much as you please, provided you listen to me. I have come from Schulheim. The revolt is preparing.

NASTI. Let me pass. I know that.

HEINRICH. Do you want this revolt to break out? Tell me, is that what you want?

NASTI. Is that any concern of yours? Let me pass.

HEINRICH [*stretching out his arms*]. You shall not pass without answering me.

NASTI *looks at him in silence then makes up his mind*.

NASTI. Whether I want it or not, no one can prevent it now.

HEINRICH. I can. In two days, I can build a dyke to contain this flood. In exchange, Nasti, I want you to forgive me.

NASTI. Still playing the game of forgiveness? [*Pause.*] It is a game that bores me. I am not concerned with this. I have no right to condemn or absolve. Those matters concern only God.

HEINRICH. If God allowed me to choose between His pardon and yours, it is yours that I would choose.

NASTI. Then you would choose wrongly: you would renounce Paradise for a mere breath.

HEINRICH. No, Nasti: I should be renouncing the forgiveness of Heaven for the forgiveness of earth.

NASTI. Earth cannot forgive.

HEINRICH. You make me tired.

NASTI. What?

HEINRICH. I wasn't speaking to you. [*To NASTI.*] You don't make my task easy: I am being driven into hatred, Nasti: I am being driven into hatred and you are refusing to help me. [*He crosses himself three times.*] There, I am quiet now for a moment, so listen to me. Quickly. The peasants are organizing themselves. They are going to negotiate with the barons. That will give us a few days.

NASTI. What will you do with them?

HEINRICH [*pointing to the church*]. You saw them; they will let themselves be torn in pieces for the Church: there is more piety in the countryside than in all the cities of Germany.

NASTI *shakes his head*.

NASTI. Your priests are powerless: the people love them, true, but if they condemn the rising, they will find themselves preaching in a desert.

HEINRICH. I'm not counting on their sermons, but on their silence. Imagine: one fine day, they wake up, the villagers find the door of their church open, and the church itself standing empty. The bird will have flown. No one before the

altar, no one in the sacristy, no one in the crypt, no one in the presbytery . . .

NASTI. Is this possible?

HEINRICH. All is prepared. Have you men?

NASTI. A few.

HEINRICH. Let them go through the land, shouting louder than anyone, blaspheming in particular. They must provoke scandal and horror. Then, at Righi, next Sunday, let them carry off the priest in the middle of the mass. Let them drag him into the forest and return with their swords stained with blood. All the priests of the region will leave their villages in secret the following night, and assemble at the castle of Markstein, where they will be expected. On Monday morning, God returns to Heaven. Children will no longer be baptised, sins will no longer be absolved, and the sick will fear to die without confession. Fear will stifle the revolt.

NASTI [*reflecting*]. That might well be . . . [*The door of the church opens. Snatches of organ music. The peasants come out, still carrying the saint. Looking at them.*] If it might be, then it shall be . . .

HEINRICH. Nasti, I implore you, if this enterprise succeeds, tell me you will forgive me.

NASTI. I will say it if you like. The trouble is that I know who you are.

CURTAIN

SCENE VI

The interior of the church a fortnight later. All the villagers have taken refuge inside the church, and now no longer leave it. They eat and sleep there. At this moment, they are praying. NASTI and HEINRICH are watching. Men and women are lying here and there on the pavement: the aged and infirm have also been carried into the church. Some are groaning and writhing at the very foot of the pulpit.

NASTI [*to himself*]. I can't listen to them any more! Alas! You have nothing but your anger, and I have blown upon it to extinguish it.

HEINRICH. What are you saying?

NASTI. Nothing.

HEINRICH. You aren't content.

NASTI. No.

HEINRICH. Everywhere the people are crowding into the churches: they are held in a grip of fear, and the revolt has been strangled before it was born. What more can you want?

[*NASTI is silent.*] I shall rejoice for both of us. [*NASTI strikes him.*] What's come over you?

NASTI. If you dare rejoice, I'll break your neck.

HEINRICH. You don't want me to celebrate our victory?

NASTI. I won't allow you to rejoice because you have brought these people to their knees.

HEINRICH. What I have done, I did for you and with your full consent. Are you beginning to doubt your own powers, prophet? [*NASTI shrugs his shoulders.*] And yet this isn't the first time you have lied to them.

NASTI. It's the first time I've brought them to their knees and prevented them defending themselves; it's the first time I have made a weapon of superstition, and formed an alliance with the Devil.

HEINRICH. Are you afraid?

NASTI. The Devil is a creation of God ; if God commands, the Devil will obey me. [*Brusquely.*] I'm stifling in this church. Let us go.

HEINRICH *and* NASTI *make a move to leave.* GOETZ *enters suddenly and strides up to* HEINRICH.]

GOETZ. Dog! You'll make use of any means to help you win your wager. You've made me waste a whole fortnight. I've searched my whole domain a dozen times to try and find her, and now I learn that she was here, while I was hunting for her miles away. Here, ill, dying on the stones. And by my fault. [HEINRICH *shakes himself free and goes out with* NASTI. GOETZ *repeats to himself.*] By my fault . . . No, nothing . . . my voice is hollow. You want me to feel ashamed, and I have no shame. It is pride that sweats through all my wounds ; for thirty-five years I have been rotting away with pride, and that is my way of dying of shame. We must change all that. [*Abruptly.*] Destroy my power of thought! Destroy it! Make me forget myself! Transform me into an insect! So be it! [*The murmur of the peasants at their prayers swells and dies down.*] Catherine! [*He walks up and down among the crowd, looking at each face in turn and calling.*] Catherine! Catherine! [*He goes back to a dark figure stretched on the paving, lifts the covering which hides it and lets it fall back, reassured. Then he disappears behind a pillar, and we hear him calling again.*] Catherine!

A clock strikes seven.

A SLEEPER [*lying on the stones, and waking with a start*]. What time is it? What day is it?

A MAN. Today is Sunday, and it is seven o'clock in the morning.
—No, it isn't Sunday.

—No more Sundays, no more Sundays. There'll never be another Sunday, our priest has taken them all away with him.

—He has left us the week-days, the cursed days of work and hunger.

THE PEASANT. Then everyone can go to the Devil. I'm going to sleep again. You can wake me for the Day of Judgment.

A WOMAN. Let us pray.

HILDA *enters, carrying a truss of straw. She is followed by two peasant women, also carrying straw.*

FIRST WOMAN. Hilda, it is Hilda!

SECOND WOMAN. We have missed you. What is happening in the world? Tell us. Tell us.

HILDA. There is nothing to tell. Silence everywhere, except for the animals who are crying because they are afraid.

A VOICE. Was the sun shining?

HILDA. I don't know.

A VOICE. Didn't you look at the sky?

HILDA. No. [*Pause.*] I brought back some straw to make beds for the sick. [*To the two peasant women.*] Help me. [*She helps a sick man rise and settle himself on a bed of straw.*] There. This one now. [*Same business.*] And now this woman. [*They help lift an old woman who begins to sob.*] Don't cry, I implore you; don't take away their courage. Come along, grandma, if you begin to cry, they'll all start crying to keep you company.

THE OLD WOMAN [*snivelling*]. My rosary, there . . . [*She points to the ground where she had been lying.*]

HILDA [*exasperated, picks up the rosary and throws it in her lap*]. Take it! [*She controls herself and says more gently.*] Pray for us! Prayers are better than tears, they make less noise. Ah, no! You mustn't pray and cry at the same time. [*She wipes the old woman's eyes with her own handkerchief.*] There! There! Dry your eyes! It's all over! Don't cry any more; we are not guilty, and God has no right to have us punished.

THE OLD WOMAN [*still snivelling*]. Alas! my daughter! You know He has the right to do anything He pleases.

HILDA [*violently*]. If He has the right to punish the innocent, I will give myself directly to the Devil. [*They are all startled and look at her. She shrugs her shoulders and goes to lean against a pillar. She stands for a moment with fixed gaze, as if possessed by a memory, then suddenly, with disgust, she says.*] Pah!

FIRST WOMAN. Hilda! What's the matter?

HILDA. Nothing.

FIRST WOMAN. You always know how to give us back our hope . . .

HILDA. Hope in who? Hope in what?

THE WOMAN. Hilda, if you lose courage, we shall all lose courage too.

HILDA. Don't pay attention to anything I say. [*She shivers.*] It's cold. You are the only warmth left in the world. You must all cling together and wait.

A VOICE. Wait for what?

HILDA. To be warm again. We are hungry and thirsty, we are afraid, we are unhappy, but the only thing that matters, is to keep warm.

THE WOMAN. Then come here against me. Come! [*HILDA does not move. The WOMAN rises and goes to her.*] Is she dead?

HILDA. Yes.

THE WOMAN. God receive her soul.

HILDA. God? [*A short laugh.*] He will refuse it.

THE WOMAN. Hilda! How can you dare say that?

Murmurs among the crowd.

HILDA. She saw the flames of Hell before she died. Suddenly, she sat up, crying that she could see them, and then she died.

WOMAN. Is anyone with her?

HILDA. No one. Will you go and watch beside her?

THE WOMAN. Not for all the gold in the world.

HILDA. Very well. I'll go back there in a moment. Give me time to warm myself again.

THE WOMAN [*turning back towards the crowd*]. Let us pray, my brothers! Pray for pardon for a poor dead girl, who has seen the flames of Hell and stands in danger of damnation.

HILDA [*in a low voice*]. Implore Thy pardon! What hast Thou to forgive us? It is Thou who shouldst ask our forgiveness! I have no thought of what You hold in store for me, and I did not even know that poor girl, but if You condemn her to damnation, I refuse to enter Heaven. Do You believe a thousand years of Paradise would make me forget the terror in her eyes? I have only scorn for Your elect—idiots, who have the heart to rejoice when there are damned souls writhing in hell and poor souls suffering on earth. I belong to the human race, and I will never desert my fellow beings; You have the power to let me die without confession, and

summon me suddenly before Your bar of judgment ; but we shall then see who will judge the other. [*Pause.*] She loved him. All night long, she cried his name aloud. What sort of man is he, this bastard? [*She turns round abruptly towards the crowd.*] If you must pray, ask that the blood shed at Righi may be visited on the head of Goetz!

A VOICE. Goetz?

HILDA. He alone is guilty!

VOICES. May God punish Goetz the bastard!

During the preceding lines GOETZ has gradually drawn nearer.

GOETZ [*with a short laugh*]. There you have it! Whether I live by Evil or by Righteousness, I always find myself detested. [*To a peasant.*] Who is that young woman?

THE PEASANT. That one? That is Hilda.

GOETZ. Hilda who?

THE PEASANT. Hilda Lemm. Her father is the richest miller in our village.

GOETZ [*bitterly*]. You listen to her as if she were an oracle. She tells you to pray for the damnation of Goetz, and you all throw yourselves on your knees.

THE PEASANT. Well, you see, we love her dearly.

GOETZ. You love her? She is rich and you still love her?

THE PEASANT. She isn't rich now. Last year, she was going to take the veil, and then during the famine, she gave up her vows to come and live among us.

GOETZ. What does she do to be beloved?

THE PEASANT. She lives like a holy sister, denying herself everything. She helps everyone . . .

GOETZ. Yes, yes. I can do all that too. There must be something else, surely?

THE PEASANT. Nothing that I know.

GOETZ. Nothing? Indeed.

THE PEASANT. She . . . she is lovable.

GOETZ [*beginning to laugh*]. Lovable? Thanks, my good man, you have enlightened me. [*He walks away.*] If she is really doing Good, I will rejoice. Lord, I will rejoice as is fit ; provided Your kingdom is established, what matters whether it be through her means or through mine? [*He looks at HILDA*

with hostility.] Like a holy sister! And I? Do I not live like a holy brother? What has she done that I cannot do also?

[*He goes to her.*] Greetings! Do you know Catherine?

HILDA [*startled*]. Why ask me that? Who are you?

GOETZ. Answer me. Do you know her?

HILDA. Yes. Yes. I know her. [*She suddenly flings back the hood from his face and uncovers GOETZ's face.*] And I know you too, although I have never seen you before. You are Goetz?

GOETZ. Yes, I am.

HILDA. At last!

GOETZ. Where is she?

She looks at him without replying, with an angry smile.

HILDA. You'll see her. There's no hurry.

GOETZ. Do you believe she wants to suffer five minutes longer?

HILDA. Do you believe her sufferings will cease when she sees you? [*She looks at him. Pause.*] You will both have to wait.

GOETZ. Wait for what?

HILDA. Until I have had a good look at you, in my own time.

GOETZ. You're mad! I neither know you nor wish to know you.

HILDA. But I know you.

GOETZ. No.

HILDA. No? On your breast you have a tuft of curling hair, almost like a patch of velvet; to the left of your groin there is a purple vein, that swells and darkens when you're making love. Above your thigh there is a birthmark like a strawberry.

GOETZ. How do you know?

HILDA. For five days and nights I've been nursing Catherine. There were three of us in that room, she, you and I. We shared our lives together for those five days. She saw you everywhere, and she made me see you too. Twenty times a night the door opened and you came into the room. You would stand there, looking at her, lazy and complacent, and then with two fingers, you would stroke her neck. Like this. [*She seizes his hand roughly.*] What power do they possess, these hands? What power? They are only flesh and hair . . . [*She flings his hand violently from her.*]

GOETZ. What did she say?

HILDA. Everything needful to make me hold you in abhorrence.

GOETZ. That I was brutal, coarse, repellent?

HILDA. That you were handsome, brave, intelligent, that you were insolent, and cruel; that no woman could see you without desiring you.

GOETZ. She was talking of another Goetz.

HILDA. There is only one.

GOETZ. Then try to look at me with *her* eyes. Where's the cruelty? Where's the insolence? Alas, where is the intelligence? Before, I could see clear and far, because to do Evil is easy; but my sight has grown confused, and the world is filled with matters beyond my understanding. Hilda! I beg you! Please don't be my enemy.

HILDA. What can it matter 'o you, since I am without means to harm you?

GOETZ [*indicating the peasants*]. In their eyes, you have harmed me already.

HILDA. Those people belong to me and I to them: don't try and drag them into your problems.

GOETZ. Is it true they love you?

HILDA. Yes. It's true.

GOETZ. Why?

HILDA. I've never thought about it.

GOETZ. Bah! It's because you are beautiful.

HILDA. No, indeed, captain. You soldiers, you love fair women because you have nothing to do and you eat spiced dishes.

My brothers here work all day long and they are hungry. They have no eyes for the beauty of women.

GOETZ. Then why is it? Because they need you?

HILDA. It is rather because I need them.

GOETZ. Why?

HILDA. You couldn't understand.

GOETZ [*going to her*]. Did they love you immediately?

HILDA. Immediately. Yes.

GOETZ [*to himself*]. That was just what I thought. Straight away or never. It's won or lost in advance: time and effort can do nothing for you. [*Abruptly.*] God cannot desire that: it's

unjust. You might as easily say some people are born damned.

HILDA. Some people have been. Catherine, for one.

GOETZ [*without listening*]. What did you do to them, sorceress?

You must have done something to them to succeed; there where I failed?

HILDA. What did you do to infatuate Catherine? What did you do? [*They stare at each other, fascinated.*]

GOETZ [*still staring at her*]. You have robbed me of their love.

When I look at you, it's their love that I see.

HILDA. When I look at you, it is Catherine's love that I see—and it fills me with horror.

GOETZ. What do you accuse me of?

HILDA. In Catherine's name, I accuse you of having driven her into despair.

GOETZ. That doesn't concern you.

HILDA. I reproach you, in the name of these men and women, of having flung your lands upon us in cartloads: and burying us underneath them.

GOETZ. Get out and be damned to you. I don't have to justify myself before a woman.

HILDA. I reproach you, in my own name, of having slept with me against my will.

GOETZ [*stupefied*]. Slept with you?

HILDA. For five nights running you possessed me by cunning or by force.

GOETZ [*laughing*]. It must have been in your dreams.

HILDA. In a dream, yes! It was a dream. Her dream, and she drew me into it. I wished to suffer with her suffering as I suffer with these others, but it proved a snare; for I had to love you with her love. God be praised! I see you. I see you in the light, and I have delivered myself. By daylight, you are no more than yourself.

GOETZ. Very well. Wake up from your dream. All this has happened in your head; I never touched you. Until today I had never seen you; nothing has ever happened to you.

HILDA. Nothing. Absolutely nothing. She cried out in my arms, what does it matter; nothing happened to me because you

neither touched my breasts nor kissed my mouth. Yes, indeed, fine captain, you are as solitary as a rich man, and you've only suffered the wounds that have been dealt you—that is your misfortune. But I—I hardly feel my own body, I don't know where my life begins or where it finishes—I do not always answer when my name is called—so much does it astonish me, sometimes, that I have a name. But I suffer with all their bodies, I am struck on all their cheeks, I die with all their deaths. Every woman you have taken by force, you have violated in my flesh . . .

GOETZ [*triumphantly*]. At last! [HILDA looks at him, surprised.]

You will be the first.

HILDA. The first?

GOETZ. The first to love me.

HILDA. I? [*She laughs.*]

GOETZ. You love me already. For five nights I have held you in my arms—my mark is still upon you. In me you love the love that Catherine had for me, and in you I love the love these people bear you. You will love me. And if they're yours, as you pretend they are, then they must love me by your means.

HILDA. If I knew that one day my eyes would look on you with tenderness—I'd pluck them out immediately. [*He seizes her arm. She stops laughing and looks at him malignantly.*] Catherine is dead.

GOETZ. Dead! [*He is stunned by the news.*] When?

HILDA. A few moments ago.

GOETZ. Did she . . . suffer?

HILDA. She saw the flames of Hell.

GOETZ [*staggering*]. Dead!

HILDA. She has escaped you, hasn't she? Why don't you go and stroke her neck!

Silence, then a disturbance at the back of the church. The peasants rise and turn towards the door. A moment of waiting. The noise increases, then HEINRICH and NASTI appear, carrying CATHERINE on a litter. She is no longer delirious, but she is half-sitting, and mutters to herself.

CATHERINE. No! No! No! No! No!

GOETZ [*in a cry*]. Catherine! [*To HILDA.*] Carrion! You were lying!

HILDA. I . . . I didn't lie to you, Goetz. Her heart had stopped beating. [*She bends over CATHERINE.*]

HEINRICH. We heard her crying from the street. She said the Devil was watching her. She implored us to carry her here to the foot of the cross.

The crowd begins to gather round them, menacing.

VOICES. No! No! She is damned! Away with her! Outside! Away with her at once!

GOETZ. By heaven, you dogs, I'll teach you Christian charity!

HILDA. Be quiet, you only know how to do harm. [*To the peasants.*] She is only a body; the soul is clinging to the flesh because she is surrounded by devils. The Devil is lying in wait for you as well. Who will take pity on you if you will not take pity on her? Who will love the poor if the poor refuse to love among themselves? [*The crowd parts in silence.*] Carry her to the feet of Christ, since that is what she is asking.

HEINRICH *and* NASTI *carry the litter to the foot of the cross.*

CATHERINE. Is he there?

HILDA. Who?

CATHERINE. The priest.

HILDA. Not yet.

CATHERINE. Go and find him! Quick! I shall live until you bring him to me.

GOETZ [*approaching*]. Catherine!

CATHERINE. Is he here?

GOETZ. It is I, my love.

CATHERINE. You? Ah! I thought it was the holy priest. [*She begins to cry out.*] Find me the priest—please find him, quickly, I don't want to die without confession!

GOETZ. Catherine, you have nothing to fear—they will not do you any harm; you have suffered too much here on earth.

CATHERINE. I tell you I can see them. •

GOETZ. Where?

CATHERINE. Everywhere. Asperge them with holy water. [*She begins to cry out again.*] Save me, Goetz—please save me: it

was you who sinned—I cannot be guilty. If you love me, you must save me!

HILDA *holds her in her arms and tries to make her lie down again.*

CATHERINE *struggles, still crying out.*

GOETZ [*imploringly*]. Heinrich!

HEINRICH. I am no longer of the Church.

GOETZ. She doesn't know it. If you will sign her forehead with the cross, you will save her from this final horror.

HEINRICH. To what end? She will find the horror on the farther side of death.

GOETZ. These are only visions, Heinrich!

HEINRICH. You think so? [*He laughs.*]

GOETZ. Nasti—you who say all men are priests . . .

NASTI *shrugs his shoulders and makes a helpless gesture of impotence.*

CATHERINE [*without hearing them*]. Can't you see that I am dying? [*HILDA tries to make her lie down.*] Leave me alone! Leave me alone!

GOETZ [*to himself*]. If only I could . . . [*Suddenly he makes a decision and turns to the crowd.*] It was through my sin that this woman is damned, and it is through my actions that she must now be saved. Leave us, all of you. [*The peasants go out slowly, NASTI dragging HEINRICH. HILDA hesitates.*] You too, Hilda. [*She gives him a long look and goes out.*] This time you're caught! However grudging You may be of miracles, this time, You must work a miracle for me.

CATHERINE. Where are they going? Don't leave me alone.

GOETZ. No, Catherine, no, my love. I shall save you.

CATHERINE. What can you do? You aren't a priest.

GOETZ. I am going to ask Our Lord to give me all your sins. Do you understand?

CATHERINE. Yes.

GOETZ. I shall bear them all in your stead. Your soul will be as pure as on the day you were born. More pure than if the holy father had absolved you.

CATHERINE. How shall I know if God has answered your prayer?

GOETZ. I shall pray; if I return to you with my face ravaged by leprosy or gangrene, will you believe me?

CATHERINE. Yes, beloved. I will believe you.

He draws apart.

GOETZ. Lord—these sins of hers are mine—You know that.

Render to me what rightfully belongs to me. You have no right to condemn this woman since I alone am guilty. Give me a sign! My arms are ready—my face and my breast are prepared. Blast my cheeks—let her sins become the poison oozing from my eyes and my ears; let them burn like an acid into my back, my thighs and my sex. Strike me with leprosy, cholera and the plague, but redeem and save her!

CATHERINE [*more feebly*]. Goetz! Goetz! Save me!

GOETZ. Can you hear me, God, or are You deaf? You cannot refuse this bargain, it is fair and just.

CATHERINE. Goetz! Goetz! Goetz!

GOETZ. Ah! I cannot endure that voice! [*He mounts the pulpit.*]

Are You dead to mankind, yes or no? Look down on us: all mankind suffers. We must begin to die again. Mark me! Give me the wounds you bear! Give me the wound in Your right side, the two holes in your hands. If a God could suffer for their sins, why not a man? Are You jealous of me? Give me Your stigmata! Give me Your wounds! Give me Your wounds! [*He repeats this over and over like an incantation*] Are You deaf! But of course! I'm being too stupid. God helps those who help themselves! [*He draws a dagger from his belt, stabs the palm of his left hand, then the palm of his right hand, and finally his side. Then he throws the knife behind the altar, and leaning forward, marks the breast of the Christ with blood*] Come back, all of you! [*The crowd returns.*] The Christ is bleeding. [*Murmurs. He raises his hands.*] See, in His infinite mercy, He has allowed me to suffer His stigmata. The blood of Christ, my brothers, the blood of Christ is flowing from my hands. [*He comes down the steps from the pulpit and goes to* CATHERINE.] My love, you need have no more fear. I touch your forehead, your eyes and lips with the blood of our dear Lord Jesus Christ. [*He marks her face with blood.*] Can you see them still?

CATHERINE. No.

GOETZ. Die in peace.

CATHERINE. Goetz—your blood—your blood. You have given your blood for my sake.

GOETZ. The blood of Christ, my Catherine . . .

CATHERINE. Your blood . . . [*She dies.*]

GOETZ. Kneel, all of you. [*They kneel.*] Your priests are curs: but you need have no fear. I shall remain with you; as long as the blood of Christ flows from these hands, no harm can ever touch you. Go back peacefully to your homes and rejoice—this is a holiday. Today, the kingdom of God begins for all men. We shall build the City of the Sun.

Pause. The crowd begins to disperse in silence. A woman passes close to GOETZ, seizes his hand and smears her face with blood. HILDA is the last to go. She comes to GOETZ, but he seems not to see her.

HILDA. Promise not to hurt them.

GOETZ *does not reply. She goes. GOETZ staggers and leans against a pillar.*

GOETZ. They are mine at last. At last.

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE VII

A square at Altweiler.

Peasants are gathered around a Peasant Woman who is acting as their teacher. She is a young woman with a gentle air. She holds a stick, with which she is pointing to certain letters drawn out on the ground.

THE TEACHER. What is this letter?

A PEASANT. An L.

THE TEACHER. And this one?

ANOTHER PEASANT. An O.

THE TEACHER. And these two?

A PEASANT. N E.

THE TEACHER. No!

ANOTHER PEASANT. V E.

THE TEACHER. And the whole word?

A PEASANT. Love.

ALL THE PEASANTS. Love, Love . . .

THE TEACHER. Courage, little brothers! Quite soon now you will all know how to read. You will be able to tell good from evil, and the true from the false. Now, tell me, you . . . over there. . . . What is our primary nature?

A PEASANT GIRL [*replying as if to a catechism*]. Our primary nature is the nature we all had before we knew Goetz.

THE TEACHER. What was that nature?

A PEASANT [*in the same tone*]. It was evil.

THE TEACHER. How must we combat our primary nature?

THE PEASANT. By creating a second nature.

THE TEACHER. How may we create a second nature?

A PEASANT GIRL. By teaching our bodies the gestures of love.

THE TEACHER. Are the gestures of love the same as love?

A PEASANT. No, the gestures of love are not . . .

HILDA *enters*. *The peasants stare at her.*

THE TEACHER. What is it? [*She turns.*] Ah, Hilda! . . . [*Pause.*]

My dear sister . . . You make us uneasy.

HILDA. How can I do that? I am not saying anything.

THE TEACHER. You say nothing, but you are watching, and we know you don't approve of us.

HILDA. May I not think as I please?

THE TEACHER. No, Hilda. Here we all think aloud, in the clear light of day. The thoughts of each one belong to all. Will you not join us?

HILDA. No!

THE TEACHER. Then you do not love us?

HILDA. Yes, but in my own way.

THE TEACHER. Are you not happy to see our happiness?

HILDA. I . . . Ah, my brothers, you have suffered so much; if you can be happy, then I must be happy too.

Enter KARL with a bandage over his eyes, led by a young woman.

THE TEACHER. Who are you?

THE YOUNG WOMAN. We are searching for the City of the Sun.

A PEASANT. You have arrived. This is the City of the Sun.

THE YOUNG WOMAN [*to KARL*]. I would have known it anywhere. What a pity you cannot see their happy faces; you would be happy too.

The peasants crowd round them.

THE PEASANTS. The poor things! Are you thirsty? Are you hungry? Come and sit down!

KARL [*sitting down*]. You are very kind.

A PEASANT. Everyone is kind here, because everyone is happy.

ANOTHER PEASANT. But in these troubled times, no one travels any more. We've only got each other to love. That's why your coming is such a joy.

A PEASANT WOMAN. It is sweet to be able to spoil a stranger. What can we do for you?

THE YOUNG WOMAN. We want to see the man with the bleeding hands.

KARL. Is it true that he can work miracles?

THE PEASANT WOMAN. He does nothing else.

KARL. Is it true that his hands bleed?

A PEASANT. Every day.

KARL. Then I would like him to put a little blood on my poor eyes, and give me back my sight.

A PEASANT WOMAN. Ah! Ah! He is just the man to do that. He will certainly cure you!

KARL. How fortunate you are, to possess such a man. None of you sin any more?

A PEASANT. No one drinks—no one steals.

ANOTHER PEASANT. Husbands are forbidden to beat their wives.

A PEASANT. Parents are forbidden to whip their children.

KARL [*sitting down on a bench*]. I hope it will last.

A PEASANT. It will last as long as it pleases God.

KARL. Alas! [*He sighs.*]

THE TEACHER. Why do you sigh?

KARL. This child has everywhere seen men in arms. The peasants and barons are going to fight.

THE TEACHER. Here, at Heidenstamm?

KARL. No, but all around.

THE TEACHER. In that case, we are not concerned. We don't wish harm to anyone, and our task is to establish the reign of love.

KARL. Bravo! Let them kill each other. Hatred, massacres, the blood of others are the necessary ingredients of your happiness.

A PEASANT. What do you mean? You're mad.

KARL. I only repeat what is being said everywhere.

THE TEACHER. What is being said?

KARL. That your happiness has made their sufferings more unbearable, and that despair has driven them to extremes. [*Pause.*] Bah! You're quite right not to concern yourselves with others: a drop or two of blood sprinkled on your happiness, why not? It isn't too high a price to pay!

THE TEACHER. Our happiness is sacred. Goetz has said so. We are not happy for ourselves alone, but for everyone in the

whole world. We witness to all and before all that happiness is possible. This village is a sanctuary, and all the peasants should turn their eyes towards us, as Christians turn towards the Holy Land.

KARL. When I return to my village, I will testify to this good news. I know whole families dying of hunger. They will be able to rejoice when they learn that you are happy for their sake as well. [*An embarrassed silence falls over the peasants.*] And tell me, good people, what will you do if this war does break out?

A PEASANT WOMAN. We shall pray.

KARL. Ah! I'm afraid you may be obliged to join the fight.

THE TEACHER. We refuse.

ALL THE PEASANTS. No! No! No!

KARL. Is not this a holy war, these slaves who are fighting for the right to become free men?

THE TEACHER. All wars are sacrilege. We shall remain as guardians of love and martyrs of the peace.

KARL. The barons will pillage, violate, kill your brothers at your gates, and you refuse to hate them?

A PEASANT WOMAN. We will pity them for being wicked.

ALL THE PEASANTS. We will pity them.

KARL. But if they are wicked, is it not just that their victims should rebel?

THE TEACHER. Violence is unjust from wherever it comes.

KARL. If you condemn the violence of your brothers, then you approve the conduct of the barons?

THE TEACHER. No, of course not.

KARL. But you must, since you have no desire that it should cease.

THE TEACHER. We desire that it should cease by the desire of the barons themselves.

KARL. And who will give them that desire?

THE TEACHER. We shall.

THE PEASANTS. We shall!

KARL. And until then, what should the peasants do?

THE TEACHER. Submit, wait and pray.

KARL. Traitors, behold how you are unmasked; you have no

love except for yourselves. But take care; if this war breaks out, you will be called upon to render an account, and no one will tolerate that you should have remained neutral while your brothers were having their throats cut. If the peasants are victorious, beware lest they burn down the City of the Sun in order to punish you for having betrayed them. As for the lords, if they should win the battle, they will not allow a noble estate to remain in the hands of the serfs and peasants. To your arms, boys, to your arms! If you will not fight for fraternity, let it at least be in your own interest; happiness must be able to defend itself.

A PEASANT. We refuse to fight.

KARL. Then you will be defeated.

THE TEACHER. We will kiss the hand that strikes us, we shall die with prayers on our lips for those who kill us. As long as we live, we have always the possibility of letting ourselves be destroyed, but when we are dead, we will inhabit your souls, and our voices will echo in your ears.

KARL. God's blood, you know your lesson well. Ah! You are not guilty, the criminal is the false prophet who has filled your eyes with this mistaken sweetness.

THE PEASANTS. He insults our Goetz! [*They advance upon him.*]

THE YOUNG WOMAN. Will you strike a blind man, you who maintain that you live only for love?

A PEASANT [*snatching the bandage from KARL'S eyes*]. A fine sight indeed! See; it is Karl, the lackey from the castle. His heart is rotten with hate, and for weeks he has been prowling round, preaching discord and rebellion.

THE PEASANTS. Hang him! Hang him!

HILDA. My gentle sheep, are you grown so desperate? Karl is a cur, for he is driving you into war. But he speaks the truth, and I will not allow you to strike anyone who speaks true, whoever he may be. It is true, my brothers, that your City of the Sun is built on the misery of others; and for the barons to allow it, their peasants must resign themselves to slavery. My brothers, I do not reproach you for your happiness, but I felt much more at ease when we were all suffering together; for our misery was the misery of all men. On this

earth that bleeds, all joy is obscene, and all happy men must live alone.

A PEASANT. You only love unhappiness—Goetz wants to build for the future!

HILDA. Your Goetz is an impostor. [*Murmurs.*] Well? What are you waiting for? Why don't you beat me? Or hang me?

GOETZ *enters*.

GOETZ. What are these threatening looks?

A PEASANT. Goetz, he . . .

GOETZ. Be quiet! I won't have these frowning brows. Smile first, you can tell me afterwards. Come along, smile!

The peasants smile.

A PEASANT [*smiling*]. This man has come to incite us to revolt.

GOETZ. So much the better—it will be a test. We must learn how to listen to words of hatred.

A PEASANT WOMAN [*smiling*]. He insulted you, Goetz, and called you a false prophet.

GOETZ. My good Karl, do you hate me so much?

KARL. Yes: as much as that.

GOETZ. Then it is because I didn't know how to make myself loved; forgive me. Escort him to the gates of the village, give them food, and the kiss of peace.

KARL. Everything will end in a massacre, Goetz. May the blood of these men be visited on your head.

GOETZ. So be it. [*They go out.*] Let us pray for their souls.

THE TEACHER. Goetz, there is one thing that torments us.

GOETZ. Speak.

THE TEACHER. It is to do with Hilda. We love her very much, but she makes us feel uneasy; she doesn't agree with you.

GOETZ. I know.

HILDA. What can it matter to you, since I am going away?

GOETZ [*surprised*]. You're going away?

HILDA. Very soon.

GOETZ. Why?

HILDA. Because these people are happy.

GOETZ. Well?

HILDA. I can be of no service to the content.

GOETZ. They love you.

HILDA. Of course, of course. But they'll get over it.

GOETZ. They still have need of you.

HILDA. Do you think so? [*She turns towards the peasants.*] Is it true that you still need me? [*Embarrassed silence from the peasants.*] You see. What service could I be to them, since they already have you? Farewell.

GOETZ [*to the peasants*]. Would you let her go without a word? Ingrates—who saved you from despair when you were desperate? Stay, Hilda—I am asking you, in their name. And you, I order you to give her back your love.

HILDA [*with sudden violence*]. Keep your love; you have stolen my purse, and you shall not give me back my own money as charity.

THE TEACHER. Stay, Hilda, since he desires it. We shall obey him. I swear it, and we shall all love you as the Holy Man commands.

HILDA. Sh! Sh! You all loved me with a natural impulse of your hearts: now it is over. Never speak of this again. Forget me, forget me quickly: the sooner you can forget me the better.

GOETZ [*to the peasants*]. Leave us.

All the peasants go out.

GOETZ. Where will you go?

HILDA. It doesn't matter. There's no lack of misery in the world.

GOETZ. Always misery! Always unhappiness! Is there nothing else?

HILDA. Nothing for me. That is my life.

GOETZ. Must you always suffer with their suffering? Can you not also rejoice with their happiness?

HILDA [*violently*]. No, I cannot! A fine happiness! They are bleating sheep. [*With despair.*] Oh, Goetz, since you came among us, I am become the enemy of my own soul. When my soul speaks, I am ashamed of what it says to me. I know these people are no longer hungry, and they need not work so hard, if they desire this sheep-like happiness, I should desire it along with them. Well, I cannot, I cannot desire it. I must be a monster; I have less love for them since they have known less suffering. And yet, I cannot bear suffering. [*Pause.*] Does it mean I am wicked?

GOETZ. You? No. You are jealous.

HILDA. Jealous. Yes. Enough to die of it. [*Pause.*] You see, it's high time I went away; you have corrupted me. Wherever I go, whatever you undertake, you must sow hatred in men's hearts. Farewell.

GOETZ. Farewell. [*She does not move.*] Well? What are you waiting for? [*She makes a move to go.*] Hilda, I implore you, don't abandon me. [*She laughs.*] What is it?

HILDA [*without bitterness*]. You, you who have taken everything away from me, you now implore me not to abandon you?

GOETZ. The more they love me, the more I feel alone. I am their roof, and I have no roof. I am their heaven, and I have no heaven. Yes, I have one—it is this, and see how far away it is. I tried to make myself a pillar and carry the weight of the celestial vault. I'll tell you a secret; heaven is an empty hole. I even wonder where God lives. [*Pause.*] I don't love these men enough; it all stems from that. I have made the gestures of love, but love did not follow; I suppose I am not very adroit. Why are you looking at me?

HILDA. You don't even love them. You have robbed me for nothing.

GOETZ. Ah! It wasn't their love I had to take from you, it was yours. I had to love them with your heart. Look, I envy you, down to your very jealousy. You stand there, you look at them, you touch them, you are warm, you are full of light, and you *are not myself*. Its intolerable. I cannot understand why we are still two people. I should like to become you, and still remain myself.

NASTI *enters*.

NASTI [*in a low voice*]. Goetz! Goetz! Goetz!

GOETZ [*turning round*]. Who is it? . . . Nast! . . .

NASTI. All men are deaf.

GOETZ. Deaf? Deaf to your voice? This is new.

NASTI. Yes. It's new.

GOETZ. God puts you to the test like all the others? We'll see how you will acquit yourself.

NASTI. Let God test me as much as He pleases. I shall never

lose my faith in Him nor in my mission ; and if He loses faith in me, then He is mad.

GOETZ. Speak.

NASTI [*pointing to HILDA*]. Send her away.

GOETZ. She is myself. Speak, or go away.

NASTI. Very well. [*Pause.*] The revolt has begun.

GOETZ. What revolt? [*Brusquely.*] It wasn't I! It wasn't my fault! Let them kill each other, I will have no part of it!

NASTI. They were only restrained by their fear of the Church : you proved they didn't need their priests ; prophets are springing up everywhere. But they are prophets of anger, and they are preaching revenge.

GOETZ. And all that is my work?

NASTI. Yes, all.

GOETZ. Indeed! [*He strikes him.*]

NASTI. Strike! Strike again!

GOETZ. Ha! [*He swings away.*] How sweet Evil can be ; I might have killed him! [*He walks up and down. Pause.*] Well! What have you come to ask me?

NASTI. You can still prevent the worst.

GOETZ. I? [*A short laugh.*] Idiot, I have the evil eye. How could you dare use my services?

NASTI. I have no choice. . . . We have no arms, no money, no military leaders, and our peasants are too undisciplined to make good soldiers. In a few days, our reverses will begin ; in a few months, the massacres.

GOETZ. So?

NASTI. There remains one hope. Today, I cannot control the revolt ; in three months, I could direct it. If we can win one pitched battle, only one, the barons will sue for peace.

GOETZ. What is my part?

NASTI. You are the finest captain in Germany.

GOETZ [*gazes at him, then turns away*]. Ah! [*Pause.*] Repair! I must always repair! You make me waste my time, all of you, whoever you are. Dear God, I have other things to do.

NASTI. You would let the whole world perish, provided you could build your City, your plaything, your model village?

GOETZ. This village is an arch. Love is sheltered beneath it; what matters the deluge, if I have saved love?

NASTI. Are you mad? You won't escape this war, it will come and seek you out in the midst of your precious shelter. [GOETZ *is silent.*] Well? Do you accept?

GOETZ. Not so fast. [*Pause. He returns to NASTI.*] There is no discipline; I shall have to create it. Do you know what that means? Hangings.

NASTI. I know.

GOETZ. Nasti, I shall have to hang these people. Hang them at random, to serve as examples; the innocent with the guilty. What am I saying? They are all innocent. Today, I am their brother, and I recognize their innocence. Tomorrow, if I become their leader, there will be none but the guilty, and I shall not understand any more; I shall hang.

NASTI. It must be done.

GOETZ. I shall have to turn myself into a butcher; you have neither weapons nor skill; force of numbers is your one card. I shall have to pour out lives. A horrible war!

NASTI. You will sacrifice twenty thousand to save a hundred thousand.

GOETZ. If only I could be sure! Nasti, you can believe me, I know what a battle is like; if we engage in this one, it's a hundred to one that we shall lose it.

NASTI. Then I take that single chance. Come! Whatever may be the designs of God, we are named as His elect; I am His prophet, and you are His butcher; there is no more time to draw aside.

Pause.

GOETZ. Hilda!

HILDA. What is it?

GOETZ. Help me. What would you do in my place?

HILDA. I shall never be in your place, nor do I wish to be. You are the leaders of men, you others, and I am a mere woman. I have nothing to give you.

GOETZ. I have confidence only in you.

HILDA. In me?

GOETZ. Far more than in myself.

HILDA. Why should you want to make me an accomplice of your crimes? Why force me to decide in your place? Why give me power of life and death over my brothers?

GOETZ. Because I love you.

HILDA. Be quiet. [*Pause.*] Ah! You have won; you have made me come over to the other side of the barricade; I was with those who suffered, now I am with those who decree the suffering. Oh, Goetz, I shall never sleep again. [*Pause.*] I forbid you to shed blood. Refuse.

GOETZ. We will make the decision together?

HILDA. Yes. Together.

GOETZ. And we will endure the consequences together?

HILDA. Together whatever happens.

NASTI [*to HILDA*]. Why do you interfere?

HILDA. I speak in the name of the poor people.

NASTI. No one other than I has the right to speak in their name.

HILDA. Why?

NASTI. Because I am one of them.

HILDA. You, one of the people? You ceased to be that long ago. You are a leader.

GOETZ *has been lost in thought, and has not heard them. He raises his head abruptly.*

GOETZ. Why not tell them the truth?

NASTI. What truth?

GOETZ. That they don't know how to fight and they are lost if they begin this war.

NASTI. Because they will kill anyone who tells them so.

GOETZ. Supposing it was I who told them?

NASTI. You?

GOETZ. I have some credit with them because I am a prophet, and I gave them my possessions. What should one do with credit if not risk it?

NASTI. One chance in a thousand.

GOETZ. One chance in a thousand! Well! Have you the right to refuse?

NASTI. No. I have no right. Come.

HILDA. Don't go.

GOETZ [*taking her by the shoulders*]. Don't be afraid, this time

God is on our side. [*He calls.*] Come here, everyone. [*The peasants come back into the square.*] There is fighting everywhere. Tomorrow, all Germany will be in flames. I am going back among men to preserve our peace.

ALL THE PEASANTS. Alas, Goetz, do not abandon us. What shall we do without you?

GOETZ. I shall return, my brothers; here is my God, here is my happiness, here is my love; I shall return. Here is Hilda. I entrust you to her. If, during my absence, anyone should try to enlist you on one side or the other, refuse to fight. If you are threatened, reply to the threats with love. Remember, brothers, remember all of you; love can drive away this war. [*He goes out with NASTI.*]

THE PEASANTS. What if he doesn't come back? [*Silence.*]

HILDA. Let us pray. [*A pause.*] Pray that love may drive away this war.

THE PEASANTS [*kneeling*]. Oh Lord, let our love drive away this war.

HILDA [*standing in their midst*]. Oh Lord, Let my love drive away this war. Amen.

The scene blacks out and the first lines of the eighth scene are picked up immediately following on HILDA'S prayer.

SCENES VIII AND IX

The peasants' camp. Murmurs, and cries in the darkness.

VOICES. Hah! Hah! Hah!

GOETZ'S VOICE [*dominating the tumult*]. You will all die!

VOICES. Kill him! Kill him!

The lights come up on a clearing in the forest. It is night.

Peasants armed with sticks and pitch-forks. A few carry swords. Others hold torches. GOETZ and NASTI are standing on a rocky promontory, dominating the crowd.

VOICES. Hah! Hah! Hah!

GOETZ. My poor friends, you haven't even the courage to look the truth in the face?

A VOICE. The truth is that you are a traitor.

GOETZ. The truth, my brothers, the blinding truth, is that you haven't the least idea how to fight.

A peasant of herculean proportions strides forward.

THE HERCULES. I don't know how to fight? [*Laughter from the crowd.*] Hey, friends, seems I don't know how to fight! Any time you like, I'll catch a bull by the horns and twist his ruddy neck off.

GOETZ jumps down from his rock, and comes to the man.

GOETZ. Well now, big brother, it seems you are three times as strong as I am?

THE HERCULES. I, little brother? [*He gives GOETZ a light tap which sends him staggering.*]

GOETZ. Exactly. [*To one of the peasants.*] Give me that stick. [*To THE HERCULES.*] And you, take hold of this one. On guard. Watch— pique, taille, sabre, estoque. [*He parries and dodges THE HERCULES' clumsy efforts to defend himself.*] You see! You see! You see! What good is your strength? You can only beat down the spirits of the air, and make the wind bleed. [*They fight.*] And now, my brother, forgive me. I'm going to knock you down a little. Only a very little. For the

good of the assembly. There! [*He strikes the other down.*] Sweet Jesus, forgive me. [*The peasant falls.*] Are you convinced? He was the strongest among you, and I am far from being the most agile. [*Pause. The peasants are silent, amazed. GOETZ enjoys his victory for a moment, then takes up his argument again.*] Would you like me to tell you why none of you is afraid of death? Each one of you believes it will only strike his neighbour. [*Pause.*] But now I am going to speak to God our Father, and ask Him a question. Father in Heaven, if it is Your desire I should help these poor creatures send me a sign to show which of them will perish in these wars. [*Suddenly he pretends to be afraid.*] Ho! Ho! Ho! Ho! What do I see? Ah, my brothers, what is happening to you! Oh, horrible vision! Ah, your fate is well and truly sealed!

A PEASANT [*worried*]. What's the matter with him? What's the matter? . . .

GOETZ. God is melting your flesh like sealing-wax: I see nothing but your bones! Holy Virgin! All those skeletons!

A PEASANT. And what's that supposed to mean?

GOETZ. God has set His face against this revolt, and shows me in advance those who are marked for death.

THE PEASANT. Who do you mean?

GOETZ. Who? [*He points his finger at the peasant and thunders in a terrible voice.*] You! [*Silence.*] And you! And you! And you! What a macabre procession!

A PEASANT [*shaken, but still doubting*]. What proof have we that you are a real prophet?

GOETZ. Oh, men of little faith, if you must have your proof, behold this holy blood. [*He raises his hands. Silence. To NASTI.*] I have won.

NASTI [*between his teeth*]. Not yet. [*KARL advances.*] Take heed of that one—he's the greatest menace.

KARL. Oh, too-credulous brothers, when will you learn to distrust your own eyes? Are you so tender and soft that you do not even know how to hate? Today, even today, a man merely has to speak in the name of the Lord to make you bow your heads. What has he done? There are a few drops of blood on his hands! A fine proof! If a man has to bleed

before he can convince you, I can bleed too. [*He raises his hands, and they begin to bleed.*]

GOETZ. Who are you?

KARL. A prophet like yourself.

GOETZ. Prophet of wrath!

KARL. The only road which leads to true love.

GOETZ. I know you now. You are Karl, my lackey.

KARL. At your service.

GOETZ. A lackey-prophet—it's ridiculous.

KARL. Not more ridiculous than a general-prophet.

GOETZ [*coming down the steps*]. Show me your hands! [*He turns them over.*] Good heavens, this man has bladders filled with blood concealed in his sleeves.

KARL. Let me see your hands. [*He examines them.*] This man scratches old wounds with his nails to squeeze out a few drops of pus. Come along, brothers, put us to the test, and decide which of us two is the true prophet.

MURMURS. Yes. . . . Yes. . . .

KARL. Can you do this? [*He makes a stick burst into flowers.*] Or this? [*He brings a rabbit out of his hat.*] And this? [*He is surrounded by a cloud of smoke.*] Show me anything you can do.

GOETZ. Conjuring tricks I have seen a hundred times in village fairs. I am no juggler.

A PEASANT. A prophet ought to be able to do anything a juggler does.

GOETZ. I shall not engage in a competition of miracles with my own body servant. My brothers, I was a general before I became a prophet. We are talking of war; if you will not believe the prophet, at least trust the general.

KARL. You will be able to trust the general when the general has proved that he is no traitor.

GOETZ. Ingrate! It was for love of you and your brothers that I despoiled myself of my belongings.

KARL. For the love of me?

GOETZ. Yes, for you who now hate me.

KARL. You mean, you love me?

GOETZ. Yes, my brother, I love you.

KARL [*triumphantly*]. He has betrayed himself, my brothers! He's lying to us all! Look at my mug and tell me how anyone can love me. And you, my friends, each and everyone of you, do you believe you are so lovable?

GOETZ. Idiots! If I did not love them, why should I have given them my lands?

KARL. Exactly. Why? There's the whole question. [*Brusquely.*] God! God who sounds our hearts and our guts, help me now! I will lend You my body and my voice; tell us why Goetz the bastard gave away his lands.

KARL *begins to utter terrible cries.*

THE PEASANTS. God is here! God will speak!
They fall on their knees.

GOETZ. God! That's the last straw!

KARL [*He has closed his eyes and speaks in a strange voice which does not seem to be his own*]. Hola! Ho! Ho! The earth!

THE PEASANTS. Hola, ho! Hola, ho!

KARL [*as before*]. I, God, behold you; men of earth. I behold you.

THE PEASANTS. Have mercy upon us.

KARL [*as before*]. Is the man Goetz among you?

A PEASANT. Yes, Our Father, to the right, a little behind you.

KARL [*as before*]. Goetz! Goetz! Why did you give them your lands? Answer me.

GOLTZ. To whom have I the honour of speaking?

KARL [*as before*]. I am the one who is.

GOETZ. Well, if you are who you are, then you know what you know, and you must know why I have done what I have done.

THE PEASANTS [*threateningly*]. Ah! Ah! Answer! Answer!

GOLTZ. I will answer you, my brothers. You, not him. I gave away my lands so that all men might become equal.

KARL *laughs.*

THE PEASANTS. God is laughing! God is laughing!

NASTI *has come down the steps and taken up a position behind*

GOETZ.

KARL [*as before*]. You lie, Goetz, you are lying to your true God.

And you, my sons, hear me!
 Whatever a lord may do, he will never become your equal.
 That is why I demand you should kill them all.
 This one has given you his lands,
 But are you able to give him yours?
 He has the choice of bestowing or keeping,
 But had you the chance to refuse?
 To him who gives you blow or kiss
 I command you to render kiss or blow;
 But to him who gives what you are unable to render
 Offer the hatred that is within your hearts.
 For you are enslaved and he has enslaved you;
 You are humiliated and he increases your humiliation:
 Gift of the morning, grief!
 Gift of the noontide, care!
 Gift of the evening, despair!

GOETZ. A fine sermon! Who gave you life and light? It was the
 Lord God! The gift is His law, and whatsoever He does, He
 bestows upon you. What can you render Him, you who are
 nothing but dust? Nothing! Conclusion: it is God who
 deserves your hate.

THE PEASANTS. With God, it's different.

GOETZ. Why has He created us in His image? If God is gener-
 osity and love, man, His creatures, should be love and
 generosity! My brothers, I implore you; accept my gifts and
 my friendship. I do not ask you for gratitude, no indeed; I
 ask only that you should not condemn my love as a vice, and
 you should not reproach me for my gifts as if they were
 crimes.

A PEASANT. Talk away; me, I don't like charity.

KARL [*resuming his natural voice, and pointing to the beggar*].
 Here's one who has understood. The lands are yours; who-
 ever pretends to give them to you, is deceiving you, for he is
 giving away what is not his to give. Take his lands. Take and
 kill, if you wish to become men. For we can only teach our-
 selves by violence.

GOETZ. Is there to be nothing but hate, my brothers? My love
 for you . . .

KARL. Your love is of the Devil, it destroys whatever it touches. Ah, my friends, if you could see the people of Altweiler; it only took him three months to turn them into geldings. He'll love you so well, he'll cut off all the cobblers in the country and pin them back with rosebuds. Don't let yourselves be deceived; you are animals, and hatred has changed you into men; if your hate is taken from you, you will fall back on all fours and into the voiceless misery of beasts.

GOETZ. Nasti! Help me!

NASTI [*pointing to KARL*]. The case is judged. God is with that man.

GOLTZ [*stupefied*]. Nasti!

THE PEASANTS. Away with him! Away with him to the Devil!

GOETZ [*suddenly enraged*]. Yes, I'm going, don't be afraid. Run towards your death; if you get yourselves done in, I'll dance for joy. How hideous you are! Lemur-people! Larvæ! I thank God for showing me your souls; for I know now that I was mistaken; it is right that the lords possess the land, for their souls are proud; it is right that you crawl on all fours, rooting, for you are nothing but pigs and swine!

THE PEASANTS [*preparing to throw themselves upon him*]. Kill! Kill!

GOETZ [*snatching a sword from a peasant*]. Come and take me!

KARL [*raising his hands*]. Enough. [*Silence.*] This man trusted himself to your word. You must learn to keep it, even when it is given to an enemy.

The stage empties little by little, and the shadows fall once more.

The last torch is fastened to the rock. NASTI takes it, and turns to go.

NASTI. Leave this place, Goetz; leave it quickly!

GOETZ. Nasti! Nasti! Why have you forsaken me?

NASTI. Because you failed.

GOLTZ. Nasti, they are a pack of wolves. How can you remain among such people?

NASTI. All the love in the world is with them.

GOETZ. With them? If you found a grain of love among these dunghills you must have good eyesight. I didn't see anything.

NASTI. That's true, Goetz; you couldn't see anything. [*He goes.*] *It is night. The murmurs die away in the distance. Far away a woman cries out, then a faint light grows on* GOETZ.

GOETZ [*alone*]. You will all die, dogs! I shall be mortal to you in memorable fashion. Come to me, my wickedness; pour into me, and render me light. [*Pause.*] How strange. Good has purged my soul; there remains no drop of venom. Very well. Let me take the road for Good, let me take the road to Altweiler; they must hang me, or let me go on doing Good. My children are waiting, my chickens, my geldings, my angels of the farmyard; they will rejoice to see me. Oh God, how they all bore me. It is the others I love—the wolves. [*He begins to walk up and down.*] Very well, Lord, you must guide me through the dark night. Since we must persevere despite the failure, let all failure be to me a sign, all misery good luck, every accident a grace; give me the good use of my misfortunes. Lord, I believe, I must believe, that You permitted me to wind up outside the world because You desire to keep me for Yourself. Here I am, my God; here we are face to face again, like in the good old days when I was doing evil. Ah! I should never have interfered with men; they are a clog. They are the brushwood a man must part in order to come to You. I am coming, Lord, I come. I am walking in Your night; stretch out Your hand to help me. Tell me; You are indeed the night. Night, the tormenting absence of all! For You are He who is present in the universal absence, He whom we hear only when all is silence, He whom we see when we can see no more. Ancient night, huge night of before creation, night of non-knowing, night of disgrace and disaster, cover me, devour my foul body, slip between my soul and myself and destroy me. I demand the catastrophe, the shame and the loneliness of scorn, for man is made to destroy man in himself, and to open himself like a female to the huge dark body of the night. Until I can taste everything, I shall no longer desire anything, until I possess all, I shall possess nothing. I shall abase myself before all, and Thou, oh Lord, Thou wilt take me in the nets of Thy night, and raise me up above all men. [*He cries aloud in his*

agony.] This hatred of men, this disdain of myself, did I not seek for them when I was still evil? The loneliness of Good, how am I to know it from the loneliness of Evil? [*The dawn begins to break slowly.*] The dawn is breaking. I have come through Your night. Blessed be Thou for Thy gift of light; I shall at last be able to see clearly.

He turns and sees Altweiler in ruins. HILDA is sitting on a pile of stones and rubble, her head in her hands. He cries out:

GOETZ. Ah!

HILDA [*raising her head and looking at him*]. At last!

GOETZ. Where are the others? Dead? Why? Because they refused to fight?

HILDA. Yes.

GOETZ. Ah, give me back my night; hide me from the sight of men. [*Pause.*] How did it happen?

HILDA. Peasants came from Walsheim with weapons in their hands; they asked us to join them, and we refused.

GOETZ. Then they set fire to the village. How easy. [*He bursts out laughing.*] Why didn't you die with the others?

HILDA. Are you sorry?

GOETZ. No survivors—so very much more simple.

HILDA. I am sorry, too. [*Pause.*] They shut us in a house, and then set it on fire. It was a good idea.

GOETZ. Yes, a good idea, a very good idea.

HILDA. At the last minute, a window was forced open. I jumped out. I wasn't afraid to die, but I wanted to see you again.

GOETZ. What for? You would have seen me again in heaven.

HILDA. We shall not go to heaven, Goetz, and even if we do go, both of us, we shall have no eyes to see each other, no hands to touch each other. In heaven, you have no time for anything but God. [*She comes to touch him.*] Here you are; a little worn-out flesh, wrinkled, miserable; a life—a wretched life. It is this flesh and this life I love. You can only love on earth, and against the will of God.

GOETZ. I love only God, and I am no longer on this earth.

HILDA. Then you don't love me?

GOETZ. No. And neither do you, Hilda, you don't love me either. What you believe to be love is hatred.

HILDA. Why should I hate you?

GOETZ. Because you believe that I have killed your people.

HILDA. It was I who killed them.

GOETZ. You?

HILDA. It was I who said no. I loved them better dead than alive as murderers. Oh, God, what right had I to choose for them?

GOETZ. Bah! Do as I do! Wash your hands of all this blood. We are nothing; we have no power over anything. Man dreams he can act, but it is God who directs his actions.

HILDA. No, Goetz, no. But for me, they would still be alive.

GOETZ. Very well. So be it. But for you, perhaps. I am not concerned in this.

HILDA. 'We decided together, and we shall take the consequences together.' Remember?

GOETZ. We are not together. You wanted to see me? Well, look at me, touch me. Good. Now, go away. For the rest of my days, I shall see no more human beings. I shall have eyes for nothing but the earth and the stones. [*Pause.*] I asked you a question, Lord, and You replied to me. Blessed be Thou who hast revealed the wickedness of men. I shall chastise their sins through my own flesh, I shall torment this body with hunger, cold, and the scourge; but slowly, very slowly. I shall destroy the man, because Thou hast created man for destruction. They were my people; only a few—a single village, almost a single family. My subjects lie dead, and I, the living, I am dead to the world. I shall spend the rest of my days meditating on dissolution. [*To HILDA.*] Are you still there? Leave me. Go elsewhere to seek your life and your misery.

HILDA. The most miserable of all is before me. This is my place. I shall stay here.

CURTAIN

SCENE X

The ruined village, six months later.

Sitting in the same position as at the end of the previous scene, HILDA is gazing towards the road. Suddenly, we realize she can see somebody coming. She half-rises, and waits.

HEINRICH *enters, flowers stuck in his hat, a bouquet in his hand.*

HEINRICH. We've arrived. [*He turns to an invisible companion.*]

Take off your hat. [*To HILDA.*] My name is Heinrich; in the old days I used to say mass. Today I live on charity. [*To THE DEVIL.*] Where are you off to? Come here. [*To HILDA.*]

When the smell of death is around, he has to be about his business. But he wouldn't really harm a fly.

HILDA. It's a year and a day, isn't it? A year and a day since Worms?

HEINRICH. Who told you?

HILDA. I counted the days.

HEINRICH. They've talked to you about me?

HILDA. Yes. A long time ago.

HEINRICH. A beautiful day, isn't it? I picked these flowers on the way; it's an anniversary bouquet. [*He holds them out to her.*]

HILDA. I don't want them. [*She lays them down beside her.*]

HEINRICH. You shouldn't be afraid of happy people.

HILDA. You aren't happy.

HEINRICH. I told you, this is a holiday; last night I even slept.

Come along, little sister, give me a smile; I love all men except one, and I want everyone in the world to be happy.

[*Brusquely.*] Go and find him. [*She does not move.*] Go along!

You mustn't keep him waiting.

HILDA. He isn't waiting for you.

HEINRICH. Isn't he? You surprise me. We are a couple of friends, and I'll take a bet he's made himself smart for this occasion.

HILDA. Spare him. Pick up your flowers and go away.

HEINRICH [*to THE DEVIL*]. D'you hear?

HILDA. Leave your Devil alone. I don't believe in him.

HEINRICH. Neither do I.

HILDA. Well, then?

HEINRICH [*laughing*]. Ha! ha! ha! You are a child.

HILDA. The man who harmed you is no more; he is dead to the world. He won't even know you again, and I am sure you could never recognize him. You are looking for one man, and in him you will find another.

HEINRICH. I will take what I find.

HILDA. Spare him, I implore you. Why should you want to hurt me? I have done you no harm?

HEINRICH. I wasn't meaning to hurt you; I like you very much.

HILDA. I shall bleed through all the wounds you deal him.

HEINRICH. You love him?

HILDA. Yes.

HEINRICH. Then it is possible to love him? How strange. [*He laughs.*] Many people have tried to love me. But without success. Does he love you?

HILDA. He has loved me as much as he loved himself.

HEINRICH. If he loves you, I won't be sorry to make you suffer.

HILDA. Forgive him his trespasses, and God will forgive you your own.

HEINRICH. But I don't want Him to forgive me in the least. Damnation has its good sides –the whole answer is to adapt yourself. And I have done that. I am not yet in Hell, and already I have my little habits.

HILDA. Poor man.

HEINRICH [*angry*]. No! No! No! I am not a poor man. I am happy, I tell you I am happy. [*Pause.*] Come along! Call him. [*She is silent.*] It would be better for you to call him; and then he'll have a surprise when he sees me here. Won't you call him? I'll call him myself. Goetz! Goetz! Goetz!

HILDA. He isn't here.

HEINRICH. Where is he?

HILDA. In the forest. Sometimes he stays there for weeks on end.

HEINRICH. Far from here?

HILDA. Twenty-five leagues.

HEINRICH [*to THE DEVIL*]. Do you believe her? [*He closes his eyes and listens to the whisperings of THE DEVIL.*] Yes. Yes! Yes. [*He smiles maliciously.*] Well, how am I to find him?

HILDA. Go and look, good father. Go and look. Your companion will know how to guide you.

HEINRICH. God keep you, my sister. [*To THE DEVIL.*] Come along. This way.

He disappears. HILDA is left alone, and watches him out of sight.

GOETZ *enters, carrying a whip in his right hand, a pitcher in his left. He seems exhausted.*

GOETZ. Who was calling me? [*HILDA does not reply.*] Someone was here and called me. I heard his voice.

HILDA. You always hear voices when you are fasting.

GOETZ. Where did those fiends come from?

HILDA. I picked them myself.

GOETZ. You don't often pick flowers. [*Pause.*] What is today? What day of the year?

HILDA. Why ask me that?

GOETZ. Someone was to come in the autumn.

HILDA. Who?

GOETZ. I don't know any more. [*Pause.*] Tell me. What is today? What day of what month?

HILDA. Do you think I count the days? We have only one now, that begins and begins again; it is given to us with the dawn, and taken away with the night. You are a clock that has run down, and tells always the same time.

GOETZ. Run down? No; I have gained. [*He shakes the pitcher.*] Can you hear? It gurgles. The water makes a heavenly music; I have Hell in my throat and Paradise in my ears.

HILDA. How long is it since you drank?

GOETZ. Three days. I have to hold out till tomorrow.

HILDA. Why until tomorrow?

GOETZ [*laughing like an idiot*]. Ha! Ha! I must! I must! [*Pause. He shakes the pitcher.*] Glug! Glug! Hey? I don't know any sound more unpleasant for a man dying of thirst.

HILDA. Amuse yourself, torment your desires. Drink when you're thirsty—that would be very much too simple! If you

didn't harbour a temptation eternally in your soul, you'd run the risk of forgetting yourself.

GOETZ. How am I to conquer myself, if I don't give myself temptations?

HILDA. Oh, Goetz, do you really believe you are living this day for the first time? The pitcher, the sound of the water, the blanched skin of your lips, I know all that by heart. Don't you know what is going to happen?

GOETZ. I shall hold out till tomorrow; that is all.

HILDA. You have never held out to the end because you set yourself impossible tests. You are going to shake that pitcher until you collapse. When you have fallen, I will have to make you drink.

GOETZ. You want something new? Look. [*He tilts the pitcher.*] The flowers are thirsty. Drink, little flowers, drink up this water, let my Heaven visit your gullets of gold. Look. They are reviving. The earth and the flowers accept my gifts; it is only men who reject them. [*He overturns the pitcher*] And now see; no way of drinking now. [*He laughs and repeats painfully.*] No way . . . no way . . .

HILDA. Is it God's will that you should become childish?

GOETZ. Of course. Man has to be destroyed, hasn't he? [*He throws away the pitcher.*] See if you can make me drink now! [*He falls.*]

HILDA [*looks at him coldly, then begins to laugh*]. You know quite well I always have water in reserve; I know you. [*She fetches a jug of water, then returns and lifts up his head.*] Come along, drink.

GOETZ. Not before tomorrow.

HILDA. God wishes you to be childish or a fool, but not dead. Therefore, you must drink.

GOETZ. I make all Germany tremble, and yet here I lie on my back like a suckling babe in the hands of his nurse. Are You satisfied, Lord? Do You know any abjection worse than my own? Hilda, you who foresee everything, if I quench my thirst, do you know what will happen afterwards?

HILDA. Yes, I know. The great game, the temptation of the flesh; you will want to go to bed with me.

GOETZ. And even so you want me to drink?

HILDA. Yes.

GOETZ. Supposing I were to try and rape you?

HILDA. In the state you're in? Don't be foolish; everything is as carefully planned as in the mass. You will shout obscenities and insults, and then to finish up you will whip yourself. Drink.

GOETZ [*taking the jug*]. Another defeat! [*He drinks.*] A man's body is disgusting. [*He drinks.*]

HILDA. Your body is sound. The rottenness is in your soul:

GOETZ [*setting down the jug*]. My thirst has gone; I feel empty. [*Pause.*] I am tired.

HILDA. Sleep.

GOETZ. No, because I am tired. [*He looks at her.*] Show me your breasts. [*She does not move.*] Go on, show them, tempt me; make me burst with desire. No? Ah! bitch, why not?

HILDA. Because I love you.

GOETZ. Heat your love till it is white hot, plunge it into my heart, let it sizzle and smoke! If you love me, you must torture me.

HILDA. I belong to you; why should I make my body a rack for your torment?

GOETZ. If you could see into my mind, you would smash my face. My mind is a witches' sabbath, and you are all the witches.

HILDA [*laughing*]. You are boasting.

GOETZ. I wish you were a beast so that I could mount you like an animal.

HILDA. How you suffer because you are a man.

GOETZ. I am not a man, I am nothing. There is nothing but God. Man is an optical illusion. I disgust you, don't I?

HILDA [*calmly*]. No, because I love you.

GOETZ. You can see I am trying to degrade you.

HILDA. Yes, because I am your most precious possession.

GOETZ [*angrily*]. You are not playing the game!

HILDA. No, I am not playing the game.

GOETZ. As long as you remain beside me, I shall not feel altogether unclean.

HILDA. That is why I remain.

GOETZ. *risés painfully.*

GOETZ. If I took you in my arms, would you shrink from me?

HILDA. No.

GOETZ. Even if I come to you with my heart filled with horrors?

HILDA. If you can bring yourself to touch me, it is because your heart is pure.

GOETZ. Hilda, how can we love each other without shame? The sin of lust is the most degrading of vices.

HILDA. Look at me, look at me well, look at my eyes, my lips, my breasts and my arms; am I a sin?

GOETZ. You are beautiful. Beauty is Evil.

HILDA. Are you sure?

GOETZ. I am sure of nothing. [*Pause.*] If I gratify my desires, I sin, but I free myself of desires; if I refuse to satisfy them, they infect the whole soul. . . . Night is falling; at twilight a man needs good eyesight to distinguish the good Lord from the Devil. [*He approaches her, touches her, then springs away.*] Sleep with you under the eye of God? No; I don't care for drunken couplings. [*Pause.*] If I could know a night deep enough to hide us from His regard.

HILDA. Love is that deep night; when people love each other, they become invisible to God.

GOETZ. *hesitates, then springs away from her.*

GOETZ. Give me the eyes of the Bæotian lynx so that my gaze may penetrate this skin. Show me what is hidden in your nostrils and inside your ear-holes. I who would shudder to touch dung with my finger-tips, how can I desire to hold in my arms the sack of excrement itself?

HILDA [*violently*]. There is more filth in your soul than within my whole body. The ugliness and filth of the flesh is in your soul alone. I have no need of the eyes of a lynx; I have nursed you, washed you, known the odours of your fever. Have I ever ceased to love you? Each day you grow a little more like the corpse you will become, and I still love you with all my heart. If you die, I will lie down beside you, and stay there to the very end, without eating or drinking; you will rot away in my embrace, and I will love your carrion

flesh; for you do not love at all, if you do not love the all.

GOETZ [*holding out the whip*]. Whip me. [HILDA *shrugs her shoulders*.] Come along, beat me, beat me, take vengeance upon me for Catherine dead, your youth lost and all those people burnt alive by my fault.

HILDA [*bursting out laughing*]. Yes, I will beat you, filthy monk; I will beat you because you have ruined our love. [*She takes the whip.*]

GOETZ. Across the eyes, Hilda, across the eyes!

HEINRICH [*entering*]. Whip away! Whip away! Carry on exactly as if I were not here. [*He comes forward. To HILDA.*] My friend here whispered to me to take a little walk, and then come back very softly. You can't deceive that one, you know. [*To GOETZ.*] She wanted to prevent our meeting. Is it true you weren't expecting me?

GOETZ. I? I was counting the days.

HILDA. You counted them? Oh! Goetz, you lied to me. [*She looks at him.*] What's the matter? Your eyes are shining, you are no longer the same.

GOETZ. It is the joy of seeing him again.

HILDA. A strange joy; he'll do you all the harm he can.

GOETZ. It is proof that he loves me. You are jealous, eh? [*She doesn't reply. He turns back to HEINRICH.*] Was it you picked the flowers?

HEINRICH. Yes. For you.

GOETZ. Thank you. [*He picks up the bouquet.*]

HEINRICH. Happy anniversary, Goetz.

GOETZ. Happy anniversary, Heinrich.

HEINRICH. Tonight, you are probably going to die . . .

GOETZ. Indeed? Why?

HEINRICH. The peasants are looking for you to kill you. I had to come quickly to get here before them.

GOETZ. Kill me, by Christ! That's honouring me beyond my deserts; I thought I had been completely forgotten. And why do they want to kill me?

HEINRICH. Last Thursday, on the plain of Gunsbach, the barons cut Nasti's army to ribbons. Twenty-five thousand dead; it

was a complete rout. In two or three months the revolt will be stamped out.

GOETZ [*violently*]. Twenty-five thousand dead! They should never have engaged in that battle! The idiots! They should have . . . [*He controls himself.*] The devil. We are all born to die. [*Pause.*] They lay it all to my door, naturally?

HEINRICH. They say you would have avoided the butchery if you had accepted the leadership of the troops. You can be happy.

You are the best hated man in all Germany.

GOETZ. And Nasti? Is he in flight? A prisoner? Dead?

HEINRICH. Guess.

GOETZ. Go to hell. [*He becomes lost in thought.*]

HILDA. Do they know he is here?

HEINRICH. Yes.

HILDA. Who told them? You?

HEINRICH [*pointing to THE DEVIL*]. Not me. Him.

HILDA [*gently*]. Goetz! [*She touches his arm.*] Goetz!

GOETZ [*startled*]. Ha! What is it?

HILDA. You cannot stay here.

GOETZ. Why not? I must pay, mustn't I?

HILDA. You have nothing to pay for—you are not guilty.

GOETZ. Mind your own business.

HILDA. This is my business. Goetz, you must go.

GOETZ. Go where?

HILDA. No matter where, provided you are safe. You have no right to get yourself killed.

GOETZ. No.

HILDA. It would be cheating.

GOETZ. Ah yes; cheating. Well? Haven't I cheated all my life?

[*To HEINRICH.*] Begin your interrogation; this is the moment, I am ready.

HEINRICH [*meaning HILDA*]. Tell her to go away.

HILDA. You will have to talk in front of me. . . . I am not going to leave him.

GOETZ. He is right, Hilda; this trial must be judged in private.

HILDA. What trial?

GOETZ. Mine.

HILDA. Why let him put you on trial? Drive away this priest and let us leave the village.

GOETZ. Hilda, I need to be put on trial. Every day, every hour, I condemn myself, but I can never convince myself because I know myself too well to trust myself. I cannot see my soul any longer, because it is under my nose; I need someone to lend me his eyes.

HILDA. Take mine.

GOETZ. You don't see me either; you love me. Heinrich hates me, therefore he can convince me; when my own thoughts come from his mouth, I will be able to believe.

HILDA. If I go away, will you promise to fly with me in a moment?

GOETZ. Yes, if I win my case.

HILDA. You know quite well you have decided to lose it. Farewell, Goetz. [*She goes to him, kisses him and goes out.*]

GOETZ [*throwing aside the bouquet*]. Quickly, to our work! Do me all the harm you can.

HEINRICH [*looking at him*]. This wasn't how I imagined you.

GOETZ. Courage, Heinrich, the task is easy. Half myself is your accomplice against the other half. Begin, search me to the depth of my being, since it is my being that is on trial.

HEINRICH. Is it true that you want to lose?

GOETZ. Of course not, don't be afraid. Only I prefer despair to uncertainty.

HEINRICH. Well. . . . [*Pause.*] Wait: it is a blank in my memory. I am subject to these absences; it will soon come back. [*He walks up and down in agitation.*] Yet I had taken every precaution; this morning I went over everything in my head. . . . it is your fault; you aren't at all as you ought to be. You should be crowned with roses, with triumph in your eyes; I would have torn away your crown and overturned your triumph; in the end, you would have fallen on your knees. . . . Where is your pride? Where is your insolence? You are half dead—what pleasure can I find in finishing you off? [*In rage.*] Ah! I am not yet wicked enough!

GOETZ [*laughing*]. You are working yourself up, Heinrich. Relax, take your time.

HEINRICH. There isn't a moment to lose. I tell you they are on my heels. [*To THE DEVIL.*] Prompt me, prompt me; help me to hate him now I'm with him. [*Plaintively.*] He is never there when you need him.

GOETZ. I'm going to prompt you myself. [*Pause.*] The lands.

HEINRICH. The lands?

GOETZ. Did I do wrong to give them away?

HEINRICH. Ah! your lands. . . . But you didn't give them away; you can only give away what you already have.

GOETZ. Well said! Possession is a friendship between man and objects; but in my hands possessions complained. I gave nothing away. I read a public act of donation, that is all. All the same, priest, if it is true that I didn't give them my lands, it is equally true that the peasants received them. How can you answer that?

HEINRICH. They didn't receive the lands because they weren't able to keep them. When the barons have invaded the domain and installed a young cousin of Conrad's in the castle of Heidenstamm, what will remain of this fantasy?

GOETZ. A fine solution. Neither given, nor received; it is very much more simple. The gold pieces of the Devil change into dead leaves when you try to spend them; my benefits resembled them; when you try to touch them, they turn into corpses. But what about the intention? Eh? If I really meant to do good, neither God nor the Devil can take that away. Attack the intention. Tear to pieces the intention.

HEINRICH. It's not worth the trouble; as you couldn't enjoy your possessions you wanted to raise yourself above other men by pretending to despoil yourself.

GOETZ. Oh voice of brass, proclaim, proclaim my evil thoughts; I no longer know if I listen to you or hear my own voice. Therefore all was nothing but lies and counterfeit? I haven't acted; I merely went through the motions. Ah, priest, you are scratching the itching place. And then? After that? What did the mountebank do? You're very short of breath!

HEINRICH [*infected by the frenzy of GOETZ*]. You gave only to destroy.

GOETZ. You're right! It wasn't enough for me to have murdered the heir . . .

HEINRICH [*as before*]. You wanted to grind the inheritance to powder.

GOETZ. I seized the ancient domain of Heidenstamm—raised it above my head . . .

HEINRICH [*as before*]. And you dashed it against the ground to smash it in pieces.

GOETZ. I wanted my bounty to be more destructive than my vices.

HEINRICH. And you succeeded; twenty-five thousand dead! In one day of virtue you killed more people than in thirty-five years of malice!

GOETZ. Don't forget that those dead were the poor; those very poor to whom I pretended to offer the possessions of Conrad!

HEINRICH. Yes, by God; you always detested the poor.

GOETZ [*raising his fist*]. Dog! [*He stops and begins to laugh.*] I wanted to strike you; that means you were right. Ha! Ha! So that's where the shoe pinches. Insist! Accuse me of detesting the poor and exploiting their gratitude to enslave them more closely. Before I violated souls by torture, now I violate them through the power of Good. I made a bouquet of faded souls of this village. The poor creatures mouthed at me, and I mouthed back, pretending virtue; they have died as useless martyrs, without knowing why they perished. Listen, priest; I had betrayed everyone, including my own brother, but my appetite for betrayal was not yet fulfilled; so, one night, before the ramparts of Worms, I invented a way to betray Evil, that's the whole story. Only Evil doesn't let itself be betrayed quite so easily; it wasn't Good that jumped out the dice-box; it was the worst of Evil. What does it matter, anyway; monster or saint, I didn't give a damn, I wanted to be inhuman. Say it, Heinrich, say I was mad with shame, and that I wanted to amaze Heaven to escape the scorn of men. Come along! What are you waiting for? Speak! Ah, it's true, you cannot speak any more; I have your voice in my mouth. [*Imitating HEINRICH.*] You didn't

change your skin, Goetz, you altered your language. You called your hatred of men your generosity, and generosity your rage for destruction. But you remained faithful to yourself; faithful; nothing other than a bastard. [*Resuming his natural voice.*] My God, I bear witness that he has spoken true; I, the accused, I acknowledge myself guilty. I have lost my case, Heinrich. Are you content? [*He staggers, and leans against the wall.*]

HEINRICH. No.

GOETZ. You are very difficult.

HEINRICH. Oh, my God, is this my victory? How sad it is.

GOETZ. What will you do when I am dead? You'll miss me horribly.

HEINRICH [*meaning* THE DEVIL]. He gives me plenty to do. I shan't have time to think of you.

GOETZ. You are sure they want to kill me?

HEINRICH. Sure.

GOETZ. The kind people. I shall stretch out my neck, and all will be over; a good riddance for everyone.

HEINRICH. Nothing finishes ever.

GOETZ. Nothing? Ah yes, we still have Hell. Well, it will be a pleasant change.

HEINRICH. It won't be any change for you; you are there already. My companion here—[*meaning* THE DEVIL]—tells me that earth is only illusion; there is Heaven and Hell, that is all. Death is a fool's-trap for our families; for the dead man, it all continues.

GOETZ. Then all will continue for me?

HEINRICH. All. You will have possession of yourself for Eternity. [*Pause.*]

GOETZ. How near it seemed—Righteousness—when I was an evildoer. You had only to stretch out an arm. I stretched mine out, and Good changed into a breath of wind. Is it then a vision? Heinrich, Heinrich, is Good possible for men?

HEINRICH. Happy anniversary, Goetz. A year and a day ago, you asked me the same question. And I replied no. It was dark, you laughed as you looked at me, and you said: 'You

have the soul of a rat.' And then, you wriggled yourself clear with a throw of the dice. Well, look about you ; it is dark—another night like the first one, and who is caught in the rat-trap?

GOETZ [*clowning*]. I am.

HEINRICH. Will you wriggle out again?

GOETZ [*becoming serious*]. No. I shall not wriggle out. [*He walks up and down.*] Lord, if You refuse us the means of doing good, why have You made us desire it so sharply? If You did not permit that I should become good, why should You have taken from me the desire to be wicked? [*He continues his restless pacing.*] Strange that there should be no way out of this.

HEINRICH. Why do you pretend to talk to Him? You know quite well He never answers.

GOETZ. Then why this silence? He who showed Himself to the prophet's ass, why does He refuse to show Himself to me?

HEINRICH. Because you are unimportant. Torture the weak, or martyrize yourself, kiss the lips of a harlot or a leper, die of privation or excesses ; God doesn't give a damn.

GOETZ. Then who is important?

HEINRICH. No one. Man is nothing. Don't look so surprised : you have always known it ; you knew it already the night you threw the dice. If you didn't why did you cheat? [GOETZ *tries to speak.*] You cheated, Catherine saw you : you forced your own voice to cover the silence of God. The orders you pretend to receive, you yourself send to yourself.

GOETZ [*reflecting*]. Myself, yes.

HEINRICH [*surprised*]. Yes, indeed. You, yourself.

GOETZ [*as before*]. I alone.

HEINRICH. Yes, I tell you, yes.

GOETZ [*lifting his head*]. I alone, priest, you are right. I alone. I supplicated, I demanded a sign, I sent messages to Heaven, no reply. Heaven ignored my very name. I demanded minute by minute what I could be in the eyes of God. Now I know the answer ; nothing. God does not see me, God does not hear me, God does not know me. You see this emptiness

over our heads? That is God. You see this breach in the walls? It is God. You see that hole in the ground? That is God again. The silence is God. The absence is God. God is the loneliness of man. There was no one but myself; I alone decided on Evil; and I alone invented God. It was I who cheated, I who worked miracles, I who accuse myself today, I alone who can absolve myself; I, the man. If God exists, man is nothing; if man exists . . . Where are you going?

HEINRICH. I am running away; I have no more to do with you.

GOETZ. Wait, father; I am going to make you laugh.

HEINRICH. Be quiet!

GOETZ. You don't know what I'm going to tell you. [*He looks at HEINRICH and then says roughly.*] You do know!

HEINRICH [*crying out*]. It's not true! I know nothing, I don't want to know!

GOETZ. Heinrich, I am going to tell you a colossal joke; God does not exist. [*HEINRICH throws himself on GOETZ and strikes him. Under the rain of blows GOETZ laughs and cries out.*] He doesn't exist. Joy, tears of joy. Halleluia. Fool! Don't strike me; I have delivered us. No more Heaven, no more Hell; nothing but earth.

HEINRICH. Ah! Let Him damn me a hundred times, a thousand times, provided He exists. Goetz, men have called us traitors and bastard; and they haven't condemned us. If God doesn't exist, there is no way of escaping men. My God, this man blasphemed, I believe in You, I believe. Our Father which art in Heaven, I would rather be judged by an Infinite Being than judged by my equals.

GOETZ. Who are you talking to? You've just said He was deaf. [*HEINRICH looks at him in silence.*] No way of escaping men. Farewell monsters, farewell saints. Farewell pride. There is nothing left but men.

HEINRICH. Men who won't accept you, bastard.

GOETZ. Bah! I'll manage somehow. [*Pause.*] Heinrich, I haven't lost my case: it wasn't brought up for lack of a judge. [*Pause.*] I am beginning again.

HEINRICH [*startled*]. Beginning what?

GOETZ. My life.

HEINRICH. It would be much too easy. [*He throws himself on GOETZ.*] You shan't begin again. This is the end, the bolt must be shot today.

GOETZ. Let me go, Heinrich, let me go. Everything is changed, I want to live. [*He struggles in the other man's arms.*]

HEINRICH [*choking him*]. Where is your strength, Goetz, where is your strength? How wonderful that you want to live: you'll sweat your guts out in despair! [GOETZ, *weakened by his fast, tries vainly to shake himself free.*] May your whole future in Hell be contained in your last moment.

GOETZ. Let me go. [*He struggles.*] By heaven, if one of us must die, it had better be you! [*He stabs HEINRICH.*]

HEINRICH. Ha! [*Pause*] I don't want to lose my hatred, I don't want to cease to suffer. [*He falls.*] There will be nothing, nothing, nothing. And tomorrow, you will still see the day. [*He dies.*]

GOETZ. You are dead, and the world is still full; you will not be missed by anyone. [*He takes the flowers and throws them on the corpse.*] The comedy of Good has ended with a murder; very well. I could never have gone back on my tracks. [*He calls.*] Hilda! Hilda! [*Night has fallen.*] God is dead.

HILDA. Dead or living, what do I care! I haven't given Him a thought for a very long time. Where is Heinrich?

GOETZ. He has gone.

HILDA. Did you win your case?

GOETZ. There was no trial: I tell you God is dead. [*He takes her in his arms.*] We have no witness now, I alone can see your hair and your brow. How REAL you have become since He no longer exists. Look at me, don't stop looking at me for one moment: the world has been struck blind; if you turned away your head, I should be afraid of annihilation. [*He laughs.*] Alone at last!

Lights. Torches approach.

HILDA. Here they are. Come.

GOETZ. I will wait for them.

HILDA. They will kill you.

GOETZ. Bah! Who knows? [*Pause.*] Let us stay :—I need the sight of men.
The torches draw nearer.

CURTAIN

SCENE XI

The peasants' camp.

KARL, two peasants and THE WITCH. THE WITCH is rubbing the peasants with a wooden hand.

NASTI [entering]. What are you doing?

THE WITCH. Those I touch with this wooden hand become invulnerable; they can deal blows but receive none!

NASTI. Throw that thing away! [*He strides towards her.*] At once. Throw it away. [THE WITCH takes refuge behind KARL.] Karl! Are you in this too?

KARL. Yes. Leave her alone.

NASTI. As long as I command here, the captains will tell no lies to their men.

KARL. Then the men can just die with the captains.

NASTI [*to the peasants*]. Get the hell out of here.

They go. Pause. KARL crosses to NASTI.

KARL. You hesitate, Nasti, you dream, and while you dream, the men desert in hundreds! The army is losing its soldiers as a wounded man loses his blood. You must stop this hæmorrhage. We no longer have the right to be dainty of our methods.

NASTI. What do you want me to do?

KARL. Give orders that everyone is to let himself be touched by this pretty child. If they believe themselves invulnerable, they will stay.

NASTI. I was dealing with men, you have changed them into beasts.

KARL. Better have beasts that stand and let themselves be killed than men who run away like rabbits.

NASTI. Prophet of error and abomination!

KARL. Very well. I am a false prophet. But you, what can you be?

NASTI. I didn't want to fight this war . . .

KARL. That's very possible, but since you weren't able to prevent it, it must mean God was not on your side.

NASTI. I am not a false prophet, but a man the Lord has betrayed. Do as you please. [KARL goes out with THE WITCH.] Yes, indeed, Lord, you have betrayed me, for You allowed me to believe I was Your elect. But how can I reproach You for lying to Your creatures, how can I question Your divine love, I who love my brothers as I do, and lie to them as I am lying now.

GOETZ and HILDA enter, with three armed peasants.

NASTI [with no surprise]. So you are here.

A PEASANT [pointing to GOETZ]. We were looking for him to slit his throat for him, but he isn't the same man any more. He acknowledges his sins, and says he wants to fight in our ranks. So here he is. We've brought him to you.

NASTI. Leave us. [The peasants go out.] You want to fight in our ranks?

GOETZ. Yes.

NASTI. Why?

GOETZ. I need you. [Pause.] I want to be a man among men.

NASTI. Only that?

GOETZ. I know; it's the most difficult of all. That's why I must begin at the beginning.

NASTI. What is the beginning?

GOETZ. Crime. Men of today are born criminals. I must demand my share in their crimes if I desire my share of their love and their virtue. I wanted love in all its purity; ridiculous nonsense; to love a man is to hate the same enemy; therefore I will embrace your hatred. I wanted to do Good: foolishness: on this earth and at this time, Good and Evil are inseparable, I accept my share of Evil to inherit my share of Good.

NASTI [looking at him]. You have changed.

GOETZ. Strangely—I lost someone who was dear to me.

NASTI. Who?

GOETZ. Nobody you know. [Pause.] I demand to serve under your orders as a simple soldier.

NASTI. I refuse.

GOETZ. Nasti!

NASTI. What do you expect me to do with *one* soldier when I lose fifty every day?

GOETZ. When I came to you, as proud as a rich man, you rejected me, and it was right, for I pretended you needed me. But today I tell you I need you, and if you drive me away you will be unjust. It is unjust to drive away a beggar.

NASTI. I am not driving you away. [*Pause.*] For a year and a day, your place has been waiting for you. Take it. You command the army.

GOETZ. No! [*Pause.*] I was not born to command. I want to obey.

NASTI. Perfect! Very well, I order you to place yourself at our head. Obey.

GOETZ. Nasti, I am resigned to kill, I shall let myself be killed if I must; but I shall never send another man to die. At last, I know what death is. There is nothing afterwards, Nasti, nothing; we have nothing but our life.

HILDA [*silencing him*]. Goetz! Be quiet!

*GOETZ [*to HILDA*]. Yes. [*To NASTI.*] Leaders are alone; I want men all around me. Around me, above me, and beside me. Let them hide me from the sky. Nasti, allow me to be a nobody.

NASTI. You are not a nobody. Do you believe a leader is worth more than another man? If you refuse the command, you must go.

HILDA [*to GOETZ*]. Accept.

GOETZ. No. Thirty-six years of loneliness are enough.

HILDA. I shall be with you.

GOETZ. You are myself. We shall be alone together.

HILDA [*in a low voice*]. If you are a soldier among soldiers, will you tell them God is dead?

GOETZ. No.

HILDA. You see.

GOETZ. What do I see?

HILDA. You will never be like other men. Neither better nor worse: different. And if you ever agree, it will be through misunderstanding.

GOETZ. I killed God because He divided me from other men, and now I see that His death has isolated me even more surely. I shall not allow this huge carcass to poison my human friendship; I shall tell the whole truth, if I am forced to do so.

HILDA. Have you the right to take away their courage?

GOETZ. I will do it little by little. At the end of a year of patience . . .

HILDA [*laughing*]. In a year's time, we shall all be dead.

GOETZ. If God is not, why am I alone, I who wished to live with all men?

The peasants enter, driving THE WITCH before them.

THE WITCH. I swear it can't do you any harm. If this hand touches you, you become invulnerable.

THE PEASANTS. We'll believe you if Nasti lets himself be touched.

THE WITCH *goes to* NASTI.

NASTI. Go to the devil!

THE WITCH [*whispering*]. I have come from Karl! Let me touch you, or the game is up.

NASTI [*aloud*]. Very well. Do it quickly.

She touches him. The peasants applaud.

A PEASANT. Touch the monk too.

GOETZ. God's blood!

HILDA [*gently*]. Goetz!

GOETZ. Touch away, my pretty, touch away. [*She touches him.*]

NASTI [*violently*]. Go away! All of you! [*They go.*]

GOETZ. Nasti, has it come to this?

NASTI. Yes.

GOETZ. Then you despise them?

NASTI. I despise only myself. [*Pause.*] Do you know of a stranger comedy? I who hate lies, lie to my brothers to give them the courage to be killed in a war I detest.

GOETZ. Hilda, this man is as lonely as I am.

NASTI. Far more lonely. You have always been alone. But I was a hundred thousand, and now I am only myself. Goetz, I knew neither loneliness, nor defeat nor anguish, and I am helpless against them.

A SOLDIER enters.

THE SOLDIER. The captains ask to speak to you.

NASTI. Let them come in. [*To GOETZ.*] They have come to tell me confidence is dead, and they have no more authority.

GOETZ [*in a loud voice*]. No. [*NASTI looks at him.*] Suffering, anguish, remorse, are all very fine for me. But if you suffer, the last candle goes out; darkness falls I will take command of the army.

Enter the CAPTAINS and KARL.

A CAPTAIN. Nasti, you must make an end of this war. 'My men . . .

NASTI. You will speak when I give you leave. [*Pause.*] I have news for you which is worth a great victory; we have a general, and he is the most famous captain in Germany.

A CAPTAIN. This monk?

GOETZ. Everything except a monk! [*He throws off his robe and appears dressed as a soldier.*]

THE CAPTAINS. Goetz!

KARL. Goetz! My God . . .

A CAPTAIN. Goetz! That changes everything!

ANOTHER CAPTAIN. What does it change, tell me? What does it change? He is a traitor. He's probably drawing you into a fine ambush.

GOETZ. Come here! Nasti has nominated me captain and general. Will you obey my orders?

THE CAPTAIN. I'd rather die.

GOETZ. Then, little brother, die! [*He stabs him.*] As for you others, listen to me! I take up this command against my will, but I shall prove a relentless captain. Believe me, there is one chance of winning this war, and that way I will win it. Proclaim immediately that any soldier attempting to desert will hang. By tonight, I must have a complete statement of what men you have under arms, what weapons and supplies; you will answer for everything with your lives. We shall be sure of victory when your men are more afraid of me than they are of the enemy. [*They try to speak.*] No. Not a word. Go. Tomorrow you will learn my plans. [*They go.* GOETZ *kicks the body.*] The kingdom of man is beginning. A fine

start. Nasti, I told you I would be hangman and butcher. [*He has a moment of weakness.*]

NASTI [*laying a hand on his shoulder*]. Goetz . . .

GOETZ. Don't be afraid, I shan't flinch. I shall make them hate me, because I know no other way of loving them. I shall give them their orders, since I have no other way of being obeyed. I shall remain alone with this empty sky above me, since I have no other way of being among men. There is this war to fight, and I will fight it.

CURTAIN

